

November - 25 Cents

SMART SET

*True Stories
from
Real Life*



HENRY
CLIVE



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Natural . . . \$10.00
Flesh . . . 12.50



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REDUCER
No. 102
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Choose Which Pounds You'll Lose —from Chin to Ankles inclusive



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THE really smart woman must be slender *all over* and Kleinert's have made it possible by designing Reducers for every part of the body.

The rubber in Kleinert's Reducers is pure rubber—specially treated by the Kleinert process which has been used for more than 40 years in the manufacture of rubber articles to be worn by women and infants.

Kleinert's Reducers are preferred because they are SAFE—COMFORTABLE—EFFECTIVE and have NO ODOR even in use.

Worn with or without a corset. Figure improvement is immediate and permanent.

Kleinert's
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
Welded Dual Rubber
Reducers



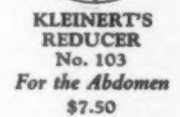
KLEINERT'S
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Combination Hip and
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Natural . . . \$5.00
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REDUCER
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\$7.50



KLEINERT'S
REDUCING
BANDEAU
No. 110—Natural, \$4.00
No. 210—Flesh . 5.00



KLEINERT'S
ANKLETES
Natural . \$1.50 and up
Flesh . . 2.50 and up

I. B. KLEINERT RUBBER CO. 485 FIFTH AVE. N. Y. C.



The very women who supposed they knew - ... have been the most grateful for these enlightening facts

IF ever there was need for frank scientific facts and up-to-date information on the subject of feminine hygiene, it is needed now. No one can say how much harm has been done in the past, and still is being done, by the widespread use of highly poisonous chemicals as personal antiseptics. Women have long been led to believe that bichloride of mercury, cresol and carbolic acid compounds, when diluted with water, were perfectly safe to use. As a matter of fact, much careful study in recent years by eminent specialists on the subject has shown that just the opposite is true.



Too vital a matter for guess-work

Here is a recent statement, by one of the country's leading physicians, which represents the modern opinion of medical authorities everywhere.

"In connection with the universal and necessary practice of personal hygiene, powerful and poisonous chemicals such as bichloride of mercury, phenol (carbolic acid) and cresol compounds are a real menace in more ways than one. When dissolved or diluted with the usual amount of water, their highly destructive effect on sensitive tissues is only reduced—it is not eliminated. Their continued use as personal antiseptics is unquestionably harmful and very commonly results in an insidious, gradual hardening of the membranes with which they come in contact. Not infrequently an area of scar-tissue develops. When diluted to the point where they are harmless to tissue they have very little of their original germ-killing power."

The unfortunate part of it is that until very recently science has been unable to offer any other effective means of protection against germ life. Little wonder, then, that thousands and thousands of women have welcomed as a godsend the news that at last there is an antiseptic much more powerful than pure carbolic acid yet absolutely non-poisonous and harmless to human tissues. It is called Zonite and it has ushered in

An entirely New Era of feminine hygiene

It is now possible—with Zonite—to obtain effective protection against germs without running the risk of accidental or mercurial poisoning or of slowly impairing and deadening highly sensitive mucous membranes.

Zonite—though non-poisonous—is a much more powerful germ-killer than any safe

dilution of cresol, phenol or bichloride of mercury. It is at least fifty times as powerful as peroxide of hydrogen. It is being used regularly in millions of homes and in leading hospitals the country over. Women everywhere are adopting it and throwing deadly poisons out of their homes. Thousands who supposed they were using the best antiseptic for feminine hygiene have invariably been grateful for the knowledge that science has at last produced something better and absolutely safe as well.

Authentic information for the modern woman

When comfort, health and peace of mind are involved—as they are in the practice of hygiene—the woman of today wants explicit, detailed information on the subject. And that is just what there is in the new and dainty booklet "Feminine Hygiene," prepared by our Women's Division. What wouldn't the woman of a generation ago have given for its many helpful and enlightening suggestions! Hundreds of requests for it are being received every day. It is daintily arranged and beautifully printed. You can obtain your copy—addressed to you in a tasteful, "social correspondence" envelope—by simply filling out the coupon now and mailing it today. Without knowing the scientific facts which it contains, no woman can claim to be really well-informed.

A striking characteristic of the modern young woman is her inquisitiveness to know the real truth about things. She refuses to be bound down in her ways of thinking by old-fashioned prudishness and bigotry. She has an utter disgust for the cloistered secrecy, about delicate but vitally important matters, that was encouraged so much a generation ago.

ZONITE PRODUCTS COMPANY

342 Madison Avenue New York City
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Zonite

Non-poisonous and more powerful than pure carbolic acid. In bottles, 50c and \$1.00, all druggists; slightly higher in Canada



Women's
Division
Zonite Products
Company

342 Madison Avenue
New York City.

I should like to have a free copy of the new booklet sent me in a plain "social correspondence" envelope.

Name.....

Address..... (S-2)

True Stories from Real Life

We Want to Take This Opportunity to

Contents

	Page
Life's Finest Gifts (<i>Poem</i>)	9
By EDGAR A. GUEST	
The Age of Women (<i>Editorial</i>)	10
By DR. FRANK CRANE	
X I Married the Girl My Wife Hated (<i>Part I</i>)	12
X On Such a Night	16
Will These Footlight Flappers Become Stars?	21
(<i>Theatrical Pictorial</i>)	
X Anything Can Happen	25
"As One Crook to Another"	28
By JOHN A. MOROSO	
X Gabrielle of the Red Kimono	30
By ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHN	
Heart Broken Melody (<i>Conclusion</i>)	35
X The Street Called Broadway	39
X Another Woman's Husband	44
Suppose You Were One of These Heroines	49
(<i>Movie Pictorial</i>)	
X The Girl Who Wanted Everything	53
X The Honor of India	57
"You Women of Thirty!"	62
By WARNER FABIAN	
X The Dream House in the Desert	64
The Matinée Idol (<i>Part II</i>)	69
The Cost of a Coat	73
Woman's Three Greatest Qualities	78
By BILLY SUNDAY	
I Meet the Prince (<i>Part II</i>)	80

Thank You!

SMART SET got off to an amazing start with its new policy last month. That is the one thought which runs through our minds as we go to press with the second issue.

I wonder if you realize how much it means to us to know that we have pleased you? We have been straining night and day to put out a magazine which would gain your approval. When it went on the stands last month we all held our breath and waited; perhaps we even prayed that you might like it.

Two days passed. The news-dealers gave us wonderful displays all over the country. We appreciated that. Three more days slipped by and the newspapers began to quote from our feature articles. We appreciated that still more, for it was a mark of approval on the part of the editors.

Then your letters came, one or two a day at first, then scores of them, telling us how much you approved of our new policy. We cannot thank you enough for your comments.

We have worked hard but your approval is all the reward we ask. We are working now with redoubled effort and a new vision. Our faith is being justified.

This issue is better than the last one. We are sure of that. We know YOU will like it better. The stories show a wonderful view of life as it is everywhere. We do not claim that these are written as perfectly as the masterpieces of great authors but we do say that they are just as interesting, and they are true. They represent life as we know it to be.

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GEORGE d'UTASST, President; JOHN BRENNAN, Vice-President; R. E. BERLIN, Treasurer; R. T. MONAGHAN, Secretary.
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Copyright 1924, by Magus Magazine Corporation. 25 cents a copy; subscription price, United States and possessions, \$3.00 a year; Canada, \$3.50; Foreign, \$4.00. All subscriptions are payable in advance. We cannot begin subscriptions with back numbers. Unless otherwise directed we begin all subscriptions with the current issue. When sending in your renewal, please give us four weeks' notice. When changing an address, give the old address as well as the new and allow five weeks for the first copy to reach you. Entered as second-class matter, March 27, 1900, at the Post Office, New York, New York, under the act of March 3, 1879. Additional entry at the Post Office, Chicago, Illinois.

If You Want Bigger Pay Make This **FREE TEST**

There's a sure way to increase your earning power. And here is such an opportunity. Look into it—you may recognize it as your one chance to earn the biggest money of your life.



ARE you ready for a shock? Then, let me tell you that if you have average intelligence and can read and write, there is a quick and easy way for you to earn enough money to satisfy any average ambition. And after reading this offer, if you do not quickly make more money, you have no one to blame but yourself.

Don't take my word for it. By a simple test—you can make in the privacy of your home—you will know that every word I say is true—otherwise. The test does not obligate you or cost you one penny. But make it! Then judge for yourself. It has proved to be THE opportunity for thousands. They have found the way to bigger pay—are now earning from five to twenty times as much as formerly. And the beauty of it is they enjoy every minute in the day's work. They are their own bosses.

The thousands who have made this test before you, and who are now making the money you would like to make, are now salesmen. Ninety-five per cent once thought they were not "cut out for selling" that salesmen were "born" and not made. They found it was a fallacy that had kept them in the rut. They discovered that anyone with proper training can sell, and they are making from \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year, because they had the vision to recognize opportunity.

Thousands Have Proved It!

For instance, A. H. Ward, Chicago, earned \$1,350 last month. Has averaged \$1,000 a month the last year. H. D. Miller, another Chicago boy, was making \$100 a month as a stenographer in July 1922. In September, 3 months later, he was making \$100 a week as a salesman. W. P. Clenny of Kansas City, Mo., stepped from a \$150 a month clerkship into a selling job at \$500 a month. He is making \$850 a month now. M. V. Stephens of Albany, Ky., was making \$25 a week. He took up this training and now makes 5 times that much. J. H. Cash of Atlanta, Ga., exchanged his \$75 a month job for one which pays

him \$500 a month. O. H. Malfroot of Boston, Mass., stepped into a \$10,000 position as a SALES MANAGER—so thorough is this training. All these successes are due to this easy, fascinating and rapid way to master certain invincible secrets of selling.

Simple as A B C

Sounds remarkable, doesn't it? Yet there is nothing remarkable about it. There are certain ways to approach different types of prospects to get their undivided attention—certain ways to stimulate keen interest—certain ways to overcome objections, batter down prejudices, outwit competition and make the prospect act. If you will learn these principles there is awaiting you a brilliant success and more money than you ever thought of earning.

As you will see by the affidavit to the left thousands of reputable selling organizations in America turn to this Association for their Salesmen. We can never take care of all the demands made on us for this

better type of trained salesmen.

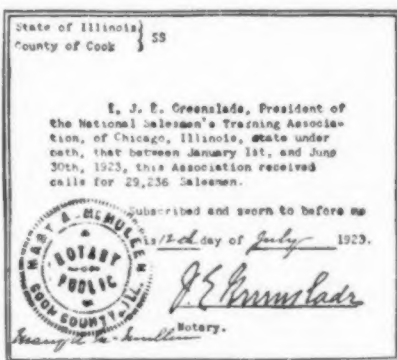
Make This Free Test at Once

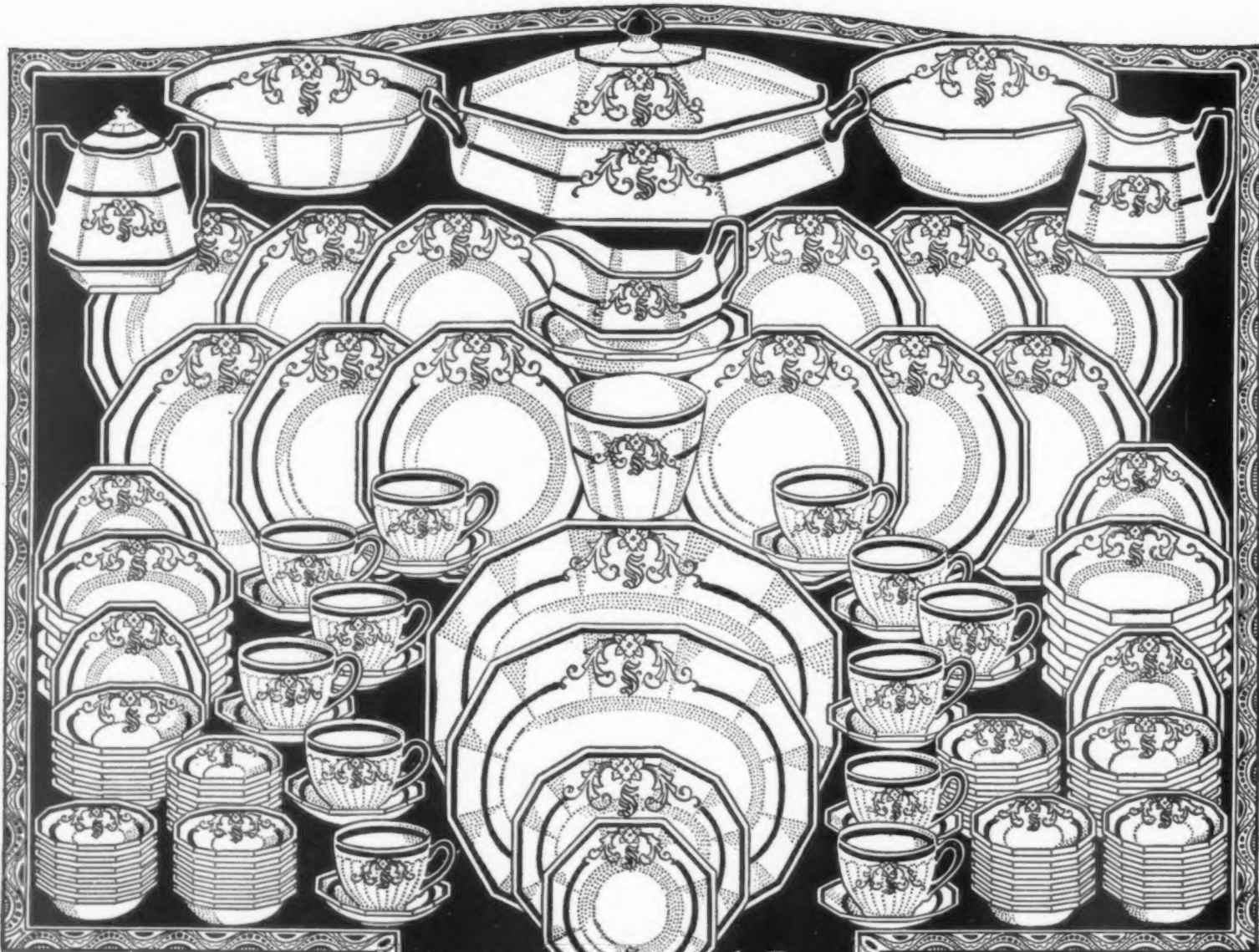
Don't turn this page until you have clipped the coupon, filled it out, and sent it on its way. The test is contained in a free book, "Modern Salesmanship" which we will gladly send you without obligation. After reading the book through you will ask yourself the question it brings up. The answers will prove whether this is your opportunity or not. So mail the coupon NOW.

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National Salesmen's Training Ass'n.
Dept. 26-S, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Ill.
Please send me without obligation on my part your free book, "Modern Salesmanship" which will enable me to test my ability at home, and full information about the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training and Employment Service.

Name.....
Address.....
City.....State.....
Age.....Occupation.....





This superb 110-piece set, with initial in 2 places on every piece, decorated in blue and gold, with gold covered handles, consists of:

12 Dinner Plates, 9 inches	12 Saucers
12 Breakfast Plates, 7 in.	12 Individual Bread and
12 Soup Plates, 7 1/2 inches	Butter Plates, 6 1/4 in.
12 Cereal Dishes, 6 inches	1 Platter, 13 1/2 inches
12 Fruit Dishes, 6 1/4 in.	1 Platter, 11 1/2 inches
12 Cups	1 Celery Dish, 8 1/2 inches

Your Own
Initial
in Gold

In Two
Places on
Every Piece

1 Sauce Boat Tray, 7 1/2 in.	1 Small Deep Bowl, 5 in.
1 Butter Plate, 6 inches	1 Sauce Boat, 7 1/4 inches
1 Vegetable Dish, 10 1/2 in., with lid (2 pieces)	1 Creamer
1 Deep Bowl, 8 1/2 inches	1 Sugar Bowl with cover (2 pieces)
1 Oval Baker, 9 inches	

NO MONEY DOWN!

No C. O. D.—Nothing to Pay for Dishes on Arrival

Not a penny now. Just mail the coupon and Hartman, the Largest Home Furnishing Concern in the World, will send you this complete 110-piece Dinner Set, and with it, absolutely FREE, the handsome 7-piece Fish and Game Set. It's easy to get this set from Hartman. Nothing to pay for goods on arrival. No C. O. D. Use both sets 30 days on Free Trial, and if not satisfied send them back and we will pay transportation charges both ways. If you keep them, pay only for the Dinner Set—a little every month. Keep the 7-piece Fish and Game Set as a gift from Hartman. It is FREE. Only by seeing this splendid dinnerware can you appreciate its exquisite beauty and superior quality. Every article in the Dinner Set has a clear, white, lustrous body, decorated with a rich gold band edge, a mazarine blue follow band and two pure gold initials in Old English design. Many expensive imported sets have not such elaborate decorations. Every piece guaranteed perfect.

IMPORTANT

Hartman guarantees that every piece in this set is absolutely first quality—no "seconds." This is a standard or "open" pattern. Replacement pieces may be had of us for 3 years. Each piece wrapped in tissue paper. Excellent packing to prevent breakage. Shipped at once.



FREE Full Size, 7-Piece Porcelain Set for Fish or Game. This beautiful 7-piece set of handsome, durable porcelain comes to you absolutely FREE, when you order the 110-piece Dinner Set. Includes one 11 1/2-inch platter and six 7-inch plates, all with assorted tinted borders and attractive colored designs in center. This complete set costs you nothing either now or later.

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7-Piece Fish and Game Set is FREE.

Use Coupon Only When Ordering Dishes—Mail Today!

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Dept. 6781 Chicago, Ill.

Send the
110-Piece Dinner Set
No. 320FFMA25, Price \$33.85

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You Want Here

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R. F. D., Box No. _____
or Street and No. _____

Town _____ State _____

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Largest Home Furnishing Concern in the World
Dept. 6781 Chicago

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Photograph by
Paul Thompson

I Can Teach You to Sing Like This!

—Eugene Feuchtinger

I do *not* mean I can make a Caruso out of every man—or a Mary Garden out of every woman,—but

I can teach you in a few short months a basic secret of voice development which Caruso discovered only after years of persistent effort.

HERE IS THE SECRET!

This is a picture of the human throat, showing the all important Hyo-Glossus muscle. Biographers of the great Caruso tell us of his wonderful tongue control. Caruso himself speaks of it in his own writings, as the basic secret of vocal power and beauty. But tongue control depends entirely on the development of your Hyo-Glossus muscle.



The Hyo-Glossus in your throat can be strengthened just as surely as you can strengthen the muscles of your arm—by exercise.

Professor Eugene Feuchtinger, noted vocal scientist, famous in Europe before coming to America, was the first man to isolate and teach a method of developing the Hyo-Glossus.

If you are ambitious to sing or speak, or merely improve your voice for social or business purposes, here is your opportunity. If you suffer from stammering, stuttering or other vocal defect, here is a sound, scientific method of relief. Under the guidance of Prof. Feuchtinger himself, you can practice these wonderful silent exercises in the

privacy of your own home. For this method of training is ideally adapted to instruction by correspondence.

100% Improvement Guaranteed

Thousands of men and women have already received the benefits of the "Perfect Voice" method. If you will practice faithfully, your entire satisfaction is guaranteed. In fact, if your voice is not doubled in power and beauty, your money will be refunded. You alone are to be the judge.

Free Book

Send today for the Professor's book, "Enter Your World."

It will open your eyes to the possibilities of your own voice. It will indeed be a revelation to you. Get it without fail. Mail the coupon now.

Perfect Voice Institute 1922 Sunnyside Avenue, Studio 20-68 Chicago, Ill.

Perfect Voice Institute 1922 Sunnyside Ave., Studio 20-68 Chicago

Please send me FREE, Professor Feuchtinger's book, "Enter Your World." I have put X opposite the subject that interests me most. I assume no obligations whatever.

☐ Singing ☐ Speaking ☐ Stammering ☐ Weak Voice

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Address.....

Age.....

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REPAIR and
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For a limited time I will supply every Cooke JOB-WAY student with 2 big complete easily outfits *absolutely free!* Many students use these outfits to make money shortly after starting my training. Mail coupon for this remarkable offer!

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Send me **FREE** your big Auto Book "The Pay-Raiser" and proof that I can become an Auto Expert at home in spare time. Also reserve 2 Free outfits without obligating me.

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Occupation..... Age.....

Start to make money quick like Morrision, Carter and hundreds of others!

W. J. Morrision, Parkersburg, W. Va., (photo at right), never had a day's experience on cars before starting my training. Read what he says when less than half-way through his JOB-WAY course. "What I have already learned is worth over \$500 to me. I have gone into business and I'm making over \$50 a week clear, with wonderful prospects." Harry Carter of Lima, Ohio, has also opened his own garage, and started to make money shortly after beginning my training. And what these men and hundreds of others have done I will help you to do!

Get my big Book "The Pay-Raiser" quick!

I will send it to you without one penny of cost. Read all the facts, find out about the demand for Cooke-trained Auto Experts. Let me tell you how easily and quickly you, too, may become an Auto Expert. Special offer right now to ambitious men. Coupon brings complete information. *Mail it today!*

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I give you complete and practical instruction in every detail of automotive mechanical work—from top to bottom and end to end of autos, trucks, and tractors.

No Other Training Like Mine!

My instruction in Electrical work—Ignition, starting and lighting systems, Battery, wiring, etc., is alone worth twice the cost of the entire course. I give you Welding, Vulcanizing, Brazing, Farm Power Plants and many other important branches thoroughly and completely. And on top of all this I include without one penny of extra charge Garage Management, automobile salesmanship and advertising, how to go into business and make a success of it. Nowhere else on earth, as far as I know, can you get *all* this money-making training.

With my training you can go into business!

There are now 15 MILLION autos, trucks and tractors. Government reports say that car-owners pay TEN BILLION DOLLARS A YEAR for upkeep! The demand for Cooke-trained Auto Experts is enormous. Every man who takes my training is assured of a big successful future. Very little capital needed. Rich prizes reward every Auto Expert who *knows* and is trained to give *better service*, as I will train you!

\$3,000 to \$15,000 a year profits!

There are hundreds of big-pay positions open right now, waiting for Cooke-trained Auto Experts and I give you Free life-time service from my Employment Department. There are hundreds of opportunities waiting for Cooke-trained Auto experts, opportunities to start a business where \$3000 to \$15,000 a year and *more* can easily be made. No other business is growing so fast, or offers you so many big opportunities.



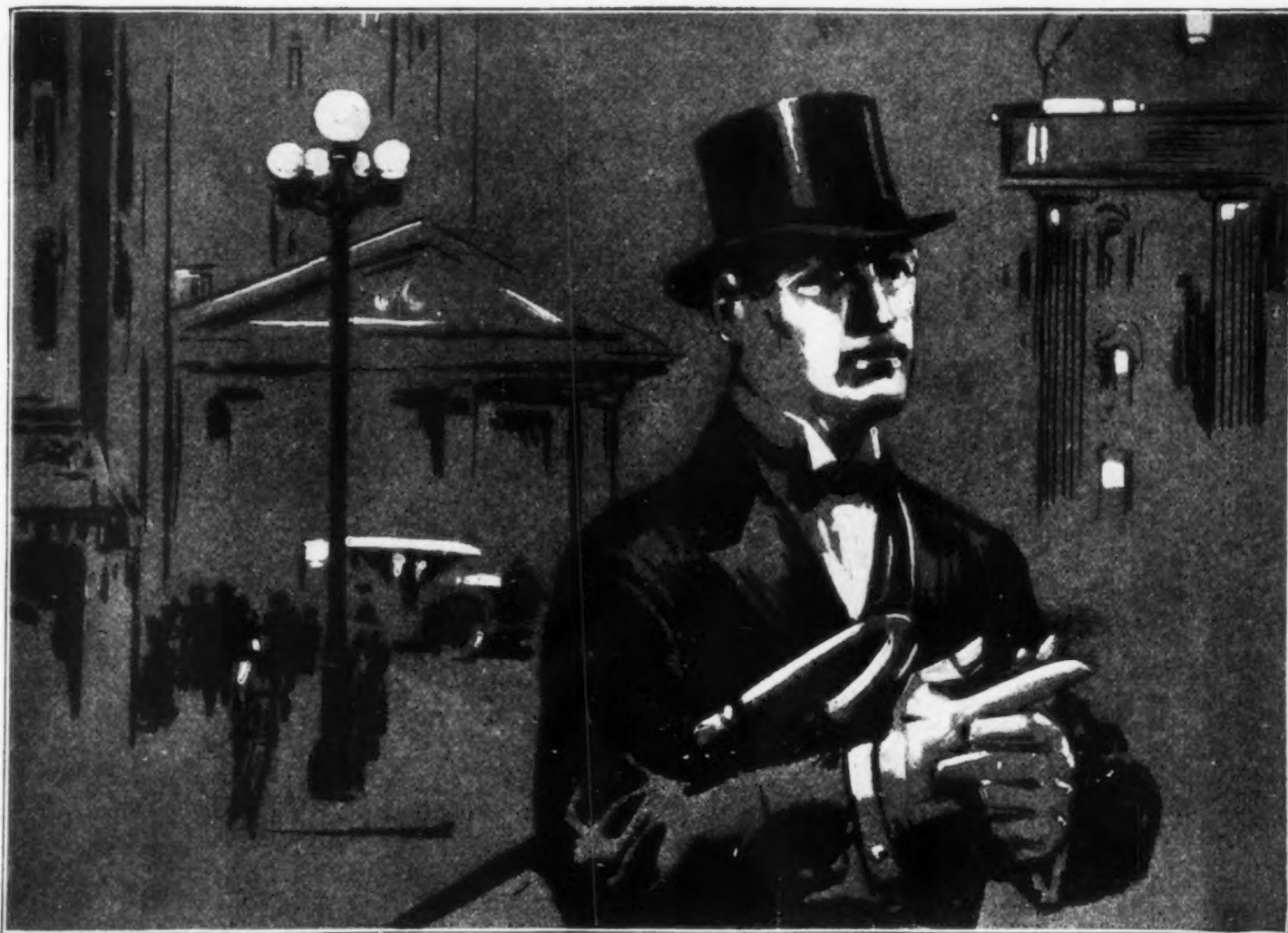
W. J. Morrision, Parkersburg, W. Va.

Read my Guarantee!

Ten guarantees in my big free Auto Book. No. 1 is "I guarantee to refund every cent of your money if after receiving my training you are not absolutely satisfied." This and nine other wonderful guarantees make my JOB-WAY course the training for you! Be sure to get my book and read all 10 guarantees—the most amazing protection offered by any school on earth!

Experience, Education not needed!

I don't care how little schooling you have, I will make you a successful Auto Expert or refund your money! Boys and men of all ages have become Garage owners and managers, Superintendents, Firemen, Auto Experts, BIG PAY executives, after completing Cooke JOB-WAY training. I prove to you under bond, that I will prepare you to take advantage of the many wonderful opportunities of the great auto business!



Follow this Man!

Secret Service Operator 38 Is on the Job

Follow him through all the excitement of his chase of the counterfeit gang. See how a crafty operator works. Telltale finger prints on the lamp stand in the murdered girl's room! The detective's cigarette case is handled by the unsuspecting gangster, and a great mystery is solved. Better than fiction. It's true, every word of it. No obligation. Just send the coupon.

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Gentlemen:—Without any obligation whatever, send me your new, fully illustrated Free book on Finger Prints and your offer of a FREE course in Secret Service Intelligence and the Free Professional Finger Print Outfit.

Name _____

Address _____

Age _____

Sore Throat?

Listerine Throat Tablets, containing the antiseptic oils of Listerine, are now available . . . While we frankly admit that *no* tablet or candy lozenge can deodorize the breath, the Listerine antiseptic oils in these tablets are very valuable as a relief for throat irritations.

They are 25 cents a package



No off-days for him ***—on account of sore throat***

A PERFECT record of attendance! More than most little folks can say during the cold, blustery, sore-throat days of winter.

Naturally, he's proud of that report card he brings home. And his mother is, too.

Both mother and son have a secret—which, after all, needn't be a secret at all. Simply let the children form the systematic habit of using Listerine, the safe antiseptic, as a mouth wash and gargle.

So often it will ward off a bad case of sore

throat and the more serious ills that may follow.

Sore throat is a nuisance—and, usually, it is the danger signal of other troubles that start with throat infections.

Listerine, the safe antiseptic, will put you and your family on the safe side. So do not be without it. It has dozens of other uses—all described on the circular that comes wrapped around each bottle.—Lambert Pharmacal Company, Saint Louis, U. S. A.

Listerine is made only by the Lambert Pharmacal Company. To avoid possible fraudulent substitution, insist upon obtaining this antiseptic in the original brown package — 14 ounce, 7 ounce, 3 ounce.

VOL. 75
NO. 3

SMART SET

NOVEMBER
1924

True Stories from Real Life

Life's Finest Gifts

By EDGAR A. GUEST

America's Best Loved Poet

*WHEN you get "on" and you've lived a lot
And the blood in your veins isn't quite so hot,
Though your eyes are dimmer than what they were
And the page of a book has a misty blur,
Strange as the case may seem to be,
Then is the time you will clearly see.*

*You'll see yourself as you really are,
When you've lived a lot and you've traveled far,
When your strength gives out and your muscles tire
You'll see the folly of mad desire;
You'll see what now to your sight is hid,
The numberless trivial things you did.*

*Often the blindest are youthful eyes,
For Age must come ere a man grows wise,
And youth makes much of the mountain peaks,
And the strife for fame and the goal it seeks,
But Age sits down with the setting sun
And smiles at the boastful deeds it's done.*

*You'll sigh for the friends that were turned aside
By a hasty word or a show of pride,
You'll laugh at medals that now you prize,
For you'll look at them through clearer eyes
And see how little they really meant
For which so much of your strength was spent.*

*You'll see, as always an old man sees,
That the waves die down with the fading breeze,
That the poms of life never last for long,
And the great sink back to the common throng,
And you'll understand when the struggle ends,
That the finest gifts of this life are friends.*

The Age of Women



THIS is not about the era of women, but the age at which any particular woman is.

Age is a more serious subject with women than it is with men, for, with them, youth is supposed to be an attraction and attracting is their business.

A curious fact is that all young women of sixteen, or thereabouts, want to be thought older than they are, while from thirty on they wish to be thought younger. In the first instance it is the desire to escape the charge of unsophistication, while in the latter it is the desire to cling to the drawing power of youth.

I HAVE intimated that the business of a woman is to be attractive, and it would hardly be denied. There are very few women who do not want the personal attention of some one man and are not pleased to be observed and sought after by many men. If the thing that attracts men is merely a physical charm, then it is right for a woman to cling to youth. It is true that physical grace has much to do with their attractiveness, but not everything.

History contains many instances of women who have retained their hold over men down to old age. They have known the subtle arts of flattery, of making themselves indispensable, and of appreciation, to such an extent that this knowledge has taken the place of mere physical attraction.

The desire for the company of the opposite sex is not merely such as results normally in marriage but may also be for that quality of companionship which cannot be otherwise received. There is a sex of ideas, of attitudes and of personality, so much so that a thoroughly feminine woman can continue to draw men long after her physical charms have failed.

AND even love is something of an art to be learned by experience. At least experience teaches one skill and how to avoid the obvious pitfalls. There is no doubt that the older woman has more experience. She knows the weaknesses and the strength of men. She understands the mysteries of allurements. She is not a mere pebble cast up upon a vast instinct; she is in control, absolutely, of the forces she wields.

The superiority of older women over the younger is the superiority of intelligence over the blind forces of nature.

On the part of younger women may be alleged the attractive-

By Dr. Frank Crane

ness of virginity. There is something to be said in favor of the first touch of passion and the first kiss. But, after all, these are, in their nature, passing. One cannot expect to remain in command of love forever by virtue of one's being inexperienced and young.

Youth passes and the woman sooner or later finds out that she must have at hand something more than of a passing nature if she is to retain control of the fancies of men. And those elements of personality which one can hold throughout a lifetime must be other elements than those of youth.

But do women age sooner than men? Statistics show that, after thirty or thirty-five years of life, the average woman has more vitality and tenacity on life than the average man. Her chances of living long and of resisting more illnesses are higher than that of man. All over the world women outlive men, and there are more than twice the number of women than men who have reached the age of one hundred.

It is a hygienic fact that women breathe better than men and are less subject to arterial degeneration. Therefore, after the turn of life, after a woman has borne her children and, in a measure rid herself of household obligations, she ought to be at her best.

A French writer expressed his surprise at meeting an old American widow who was travelling. She was seeing the world, and enjoying it immensely, after a long life of domesticity and stay-at-home. A French woman would have remained among her old surroundings; she could not have endured to leave her children and grandchildren; but the American woman was seeing the world.

There is no doubt that, after the age of forty-five, a woman is better equipped to enter into the enjoyments of living and, as far as that is concerned, better qualified to be a companion of men, than she was in her younger days. To those who realize that a woman's charm consists in her mental resources and in her personality, the charms of youth will not be essential. In the nature of the case they will fade.

If the woman has accumulated her resources, she has no fear of advancing old age. She will not brood upon the imaginary law of nature, and grow old because of it, in the same way that the hypochondriac looks ill because he is obsessed by imaginary fears for his health.





Grace

MY FIRST wife gave me my second wife. More than that she forced me into the very arms of the second woman to bear my name. Of course she would deny this. She believes she has been cruelly injured; that Fate has played her a sorry trick and that all men are villains and deceivers and of them all I am perhaps the worst. As to that I submit no defense. I am perfectly willing to let the story I am about to tell stand for itself, permit the reader to reach his own conclusions. May the good Lord help me to be fair and set down only that which is true.

I never knew I was a marrying man, because I feared marriage and I was well into my thirties when I met the girl who seemed to have all the qualifications of charm and dignity which appeal to a man of my sober tastes.

Before my marriage my standing in society was not recognizable and my position in life was merely that of a promising young builder in a booming western town.

On the other hand, the girl who had so impressed me was a New Englander of New England. If you did not recognize from her name, which was Grace Winthrop, that she dated back to the *Mayflower*, you would have surmised it from her manner.

She was tall, inclined to be angular, her hair ash-blond, and her eyes a blue-green. Striking, if not beautiful; no mere prettiness could compare with her poise,

I Married **My Wife**

*She Wouldn't
Loved Her. She
Must Be*

her insolent bearing and her ever-ready tongue! She was, I think the perfect aristocrat.

I lived with my younger brother in a house kept by my sister. Everything was comfortable and agreeable. But it lacked a ruler—the thing which makes a home a man's castle—and as I watched Grace Winthrop, dignified and proud, I found myself picturing her as the head of my household.

The more I thought about it, the more the idea appealed to me. Her rather cold face came to have, for me, a hidden loveliness; her eyes seemed soft and her rare smile took on beauty.

When the Chicago Symphony Orchestra came to the city for a concert, I asked Grace to go with me. It was the first time I had tried to make a formal engagement with her, and I was somewhat fearful that she would refuse.

But she didn't. She said:

"Why, that would be splendid. I haven't heard a good orchestra since I left Boston."

I liked her directness and would have been embarrassed had she shown any hesitation.

What is more, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony was on the program and not once did Grace Winthrop say that the piece was played much better by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

AFTER the concert, we went to supper and here again she pleased me by her acceptance of a cocktail and some wine later. It seemed to show that she had been brought up to these things—that she was a woman of the world. But when Charlie Byron's wife at another table lit a cigarette, Miss Winthrop showed her distaste for such behavior.

"I suppose I'm old-fashioned," she said, "but I just can't get used to a woman's smoking in public. If they must do it, let them do it in their own home."

Now that was exactly my idea. I disliked seeing women smoke, mostly because they were so self-conscious about it.

But Miss Winthrop continued now that she had started on the subject:

the Girl Hated

*Believe That I
Insisted That There
Someone Else.*

"Sometimes I'm afraid I was born into the wrong generation. Everything seems to be taken so lightly these days. Men have no respect for women because women show no respect for themselves. What do marriage vows mean any more? Nothing at all! Marriage just seems to be a legal privilege for a man and woman to play a dangerous game and then hide behind the protection of a husband or wife—"

SHE paused, partly to control herself and partly, I felt, to give me a chance for comment. However, I made no audible answer, but simply nodded assent to indicate that I was in sympathy with her views.

As in fact I was. My horizon at that time was that of the small town, and of a small-town bachelor who had outgrown his own generation and now saw the oncoming young people act in a manner that he considered shocking.

"When I was very young, I made up my mind that I should never marry," continued Miss Winthrop. "And the more I see of marriage and the more I see of men, the gladder I am that I haven't an erring husband to worry about. There is not a man on earth to be trusted."

She did not tell me why she knew that no man was to be trusted. She did not tell me just now she was hardly recovered from a disappointing love affair. She did not tell me that she had been engaged to marry and that only a week before the wedding day her fiancé had eloped with another girl.

Had she told these things, I might have understood many of her strange mental explosions that came to make our lives miserable. But now I thought Grace Winthrop was merely indulging in the sort of small talk which all girls, who pretend to distrust men, engage in. So I smiled at her remark and said: "Not one?"

"No, not one—I mean that!" she answered.

"Well, I'll prove to you there is one at least," I promised.

Then I took her to my home, had her out to dinner,

to the theatre. I felt immensely happy with this stately disdainful woman. And I won her.

MARRIAGE acted as a spur on me. I had always dreamed of doing big things. Now came my chance to do them. Oscar Ives decided to put up a big office building, the town's first skyscraper. Gorman and Black, Chicago architects, drew the plans, and it was practically conceded that a Chicago contractor would erect the structure.

It was only a sop to local pride that I, a small builder, was given a chance to bid on the job. I had never handled so large a building operation and Oscar Ives himself did not think I should be given the contract even though my bid might be the low one.

I studied the plans carefully and that night took a train for Chicago. I finally convinced the office boy at the architects' that my business was sufficiently important for me to see Mr. Gorman, the senior member of the firm.

I found Mr. Gorman much more human than his lowly subordinate. He offered me a cigar and then pleasantly inquired, "What can I do for you, Mr. Henderson?"

"Oscar Ives will never make any money out of this building from these floor plans," I told him, "and I thought you ought to know about it."



Ralph

"H'm," said the architect, "upon what do you base your opinion?"

"On the kind of tenants Ives will have to rent to. There are not enough big concerns in our town to fill up these large suites. This building would do for Chicago, but not for a small town."

"Have you told Mr. Ives about this?" asked the architect.

"No, they are your plans; Mr. Ives is your client not mine. The information I am giving you is rightfully yours—first," I said.

"That was thoughtful of you," said the architect, non-committally, "and I am very much obliged. We will look into the matter carefully."

You may be sure that Gorman and Black was an extraordinary and extremely successful firm. Otherwise, my well-meant and practical suggestion would have received little consideration. As it was, after the architects had checked up on the local situation, all plans and specifications were recalled, new ones issued, and through the recommendation of the architects I was given the contract for the work.

THIS contract was the first of my record-breaking jobs. The Ives building was completed thirty days before the contract date.

Soon I was summoned to Chicago by Gorman and Black, and given the welcome accorded a man of achievement. After dinner, in the lounging room of the University Club, seated between Sam Gorman and Jim Black, a fine cigar in my mouth, I was startled to hear Gorman say:

"Henderson, have you ever thought of coming to Chicago?"

"Well, not exactly," I said.

"You ought to. You are too big a man for a small town. There isn't enough there to keep your imagination active."

"Yes," I said, "but it takes capital to break into a place like Chicago and you are pretty well equipped with contractors now."

Mr. Gorman looked at Mr. Black and Mr. Black looked at Mr. Gorman, then Mr. Gorman spoke again.

"Henderson," he said, "we like you. We like the way you came to us first with your suggestions for improving those plans. We like your work, the way you handled the Ives job. You are the kind of man we want to help along and we want you to come into our organization . . . Don't answer me now. Go and think about it; talk it over with your wife. Then let us know."

IT IS not easy for a man to quit the town of his birth, his friends, his business career. I thought the question over carefully, and there were factors that swayed me first one way, then another. I was not entirely decided when I spoke to my wife about it.

"Gorman wants me to go to Chicago," I said.

"You'll go, of course," she commented, settling the issue, so far as she was concerned, in brief fashion.

"Well, I thought we might talk it over," I suggested.

"What is there to talk over?" she asked. "That's a big opportunity. And certainly you can't weigh this pokey little place against Chicago."

"But this will be a big place someday. Look at the building under way—"

"Ralph, you make me tired. You are no small-town man and I certainly don't want to be buried in this hole all my life."

"Why, I thought you liked it here," I said.

"Well, I don't," she said. "There are too many ghosts."

"Too many ghosts?" I asked, puzzled as to her meaning.

"Yes, ghosts of your old love affairs. They pop up at me every place I go. All I hear is: 'Ralph and I used to be awfully good friends.' Or, 'Ralph and Elsie were engaged, you know,' or, 'Everybody thought Marie and Ralph would make a good match, and really the way they went together you would have thought they would get married.'"

"Well, I've heard that kind of talk until I'm sick of it, and we never go any place that all of your old flames don't call you 'Ralphie' and act as if you should have married them simply for the sake of sweet justice."

"Why, they don't mean anything," I laughed. "Of course I chased around a lot with the girls when I was a young fellow, but I got over it and so did they. All the girls I went with are married now and have families of their own. They shouldn't worry you."

"Well, the fact remains that they do. No doubt they are just a lot of ignorant small-town women, but I don't like them and I never will. And I don't like this town, either. I want to get away from it."

"All right then," I agreed. "I didn't have any idea you were so het up about it. We'll go to Chicago."

As I thought over my wife's curious attitude toward my old sweethearts, I was not particularly disturbed at the time. I could see that a sensitive woman would feel exactly as Grace felt, and I rather blamed myself for not shielding her from these things.

Yet I hadn't, because I had thought she was her own capable protector—her attitude verging on the snobbish so much that people were prone to comment upon it.

But to fancy she was jealous—or capable of jealousy! One never knew a woman, after all!

So I turned over my business to my younger brother, and my wife and I went to Chicago.

I was given a magnificent office on one of the floors occupied by Gorman and Black, and as I surveyed the richness of my surroundings, looked out from my windows across the gleaming black ribbon of Michigan Avenue, and beyond to the sparkling green of the lake, I had to smile.

WHAT a contrast to the little office room I had back in the old town! What a greater contrast between this glory and the construction shack with its jumble of papers, its rolls of blue prints and the fragrance of new lumber and tobacco smoke!

Yet I did not altogether lose the thrill of construction. During the first two years of my association with Gorman and Black I spent most of my time superintending big jobs. But soon I became too valuable to spend my time watching a building go up. I sold jobs where Gorman, the business man of the firm, had failed and where Black, the artistic man, could never sell them.

They were a strange pair—Gorman and Black. How they complimented each other! Gorman was a man built on large lines, a huge frame, robust nature, a large appetite for life.

Love affairs were Gorman's hobbies; lovely, statuesque women—almost any woman that took his fancy was his for less than the asking. But he never boasted of a conquest. He knew how to win women, but he also knew how to let them go—and never with the tears and strife and turmoil which generally wind up a romance of this kind.

Sam Gorman violated all the laws of God and man which I had been brought up to believe inviolable—laws which, if transgressed, would lead to utter ruin.

Sam Gorman and his affairs shocked me.

But if he shocked me, he did more than that to my wife. Before she had been in Chicago a week, she began to hear rumors of Sam [Turn to page 84]

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Miss Wilding



I Couldn't Be Married

On Such a Night

*The Turning Point in Her Life Was Just
at the Bottom of the Stairs.*

IT WAS beautiful beyond words—a string of tiny perfect pearls, their soft creaminess shading to faintest pink in the late afternoon sunshine. I drew them uneasily through my thin brown fingers, hoping that Mother and Mr. Warner wouldn't notice that my hands were shaking, or see that palpitating spot in my throat where my heart was shutting off my breath.

"If only her skin were whiter," Mother said. "And if her hollows would fill out a little, so she wouldn't suggest bones."

"She is lovely." Mr. Warner's voice had the new oily smoothness it had taken on since he stopped being just a friend of the family. "She has the thinness of youth. I like her so."

He patted my hand. His hands did not suggest bones. They were smooth and pink and dented at the knuckles. His nails were polished. I tried to imagine Lancelot with hands like that, or Richard Cœur de Lion, or Rupert Brooke. Theirs had been hard hands that held the sword, the gun; that steered a ship; that fought and built and protected and loved. But then, I kept forgetting—Mr. Warner was rich. Witness the pearls.

"Little slim princess," he went on softly, "look at me!" To save my life I couldn't raise my eyes above that top button on his vest. I couldn't meet his eyes, see the faint color creep up his face to the thin grayish blond hair.

Mr. Warner was a good-looking man. Everyone said so. He was tall—important-looking, with the air of a man who has carved out his own very good fortune; always immaculately dressed. Only, now, the possessive note in his voice, the touch of his hands, left my skin covered with little cold shivers—a sickening blackness before my eyes. Twice it had been like that.

HE TOOK a step nearer. "I'll go upstairs," I gasped hurriedly. "I'll put on my black dress, Mother, so you can see how pretty—" Mr. Warner laughed, reached out his hand.

"You're beautiful in anything, little Janet! Come here and I'll put them on you, and you can thank me properly."

I glanced appealingly at Mother. She gave me a warning little frown, and went out.

I stood icily. For a long time he fumbled with the clasp. I tried to smile, but my lips were stiff. He

stepped back finally, and rubbed his hands delightedly. "Lovely," he whispered. "You lovely, silent little girl! What do I get for it?"

I raised my arms desperately. I shut my eyes, tightened my lips. A world of rocking blackness! I stifled, tried to endure, pulled myself free, and ran. I heard his laughter, his "poor, frightened little girl. You'll get over that!" I stumbled down the hall into the kitchen to Irish Maggie. In all my slipping universe there was no one else. She would sympathize even if she didn't understand. With trembling hands I shot the bolt after me and leaned against the door, shaking with foolish hysterical sobs.

I heard the clatter of a dish or something, a step, but for once Maggie of the ready words and quick sympathy did not speak or touch me.

"Oh, Maggie," I whirled around, flinging out my hands to her. "Maggie, they're killing me!"

HANDS closed over mine. Hard hands, not Maggie's. I looked up through my blinding tears at a young man in overalls, his gray eyes wide with astonishment under straight black brows, a smudge of black across his cheek. Wrenches and pliers were scattered about, dangling ends of wire. He was the young electrician Mrs. Marsh had sent to change the kitchen lights. I had forgotten about him, though I'd seen him several times.

"I'm—I'm sorry," I stammered. "I—I—"

The knob of the door rattled wildly. In a panic I flung myself against him, clutched his arm.

"Janet," Mother's voice came sharply. "Open this door at once."

In a flash, before I could speak, his arm was around me, my face buried against his shoulder.

He answered with curt swiftness. "I'm working on this lock. You can't open this door till I'm through. The maid told me to go ahead."

"But my daughter! Is she there with you?"

"I'm an electrician, ma'am. I'm allowed two hours to finish this job and I'm too busy to watch children."

Already the little steel instrument in his fingers was clicking at the lock. But his arm did not relax its grasp. My face was still against his rough, tobacco-scented shoulder, and every nerve in me was tingling flame! I freed myself in an agony of shame and confusion which

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deepened as I looked up at his square chin and his cool gray eyes. What must he think of me? And yet, in that long two minutes, under my cheek his heart had gained in swiftness, as if he were running a race.

Mother smoothed out the pink satin chemise against her, straightening a bit of its exquisite lace, touching the tiny flowers on it, flowers she had fashioned of the palest blue ribbon. In the smart shops it would have cost a ridiculous sum. There were other things spread on the living room couch, things of pink satin and lace, of white handkerchief linen, a kimono of geranium silk.

"Thank Heaven that's the last!" Mother patted her

hair and looked her disapproval of me in general. I was thin and big-eyed, and I had no style.

"In three more days you'll be safely married, and I won't have to worry about bills and wonder how I can get clothes for you. I can't think how I ever managed with you and Helen both!" Helen was my oldest sister. She had been married a year and lived in far-off California. "Helen was pretty, though, while you, Janet, are your father over again. I was fortunate in getting such a man for you, though, goodness knows, I worked hard enough. Even now it doesn't seem possible."

"No," I said slowly, the little dog-eared book slipped out of my hands. All my flamboyant hopes and dreams blazed up.

"Oh, Mother," my voice came shakily, "if I could only have gone to work for awhile! I'm only nineteen. I'd have plenty of time——"

THERE. Janet, that will be quite enough! I'm foolish to expect you to be grateful to me for all my sacrificing. If you had ever worked, if you knew what I'm saving you from!"

"But I don't want to be saved! I'm not afraid——"

"Stop at once! You ought to be on your knees giving thanks! Robert Warner is one of the best men in the world. And think of his position—a! he can do for you."

"Mother, he's old, and he's had—his life—it isn't fair!"

"Old at forty-nine! You stupid girl, that's young for a man! And his wife is safely divorced, isn't she? And you'll have cars, and that house in Westchester, and trips to Europe. You are too ignorant, too inexperienced to imagine the wonderful world you're getting into."

"You've told me often enough," I said bitterly.

"I wouldn't be a good mother if I didn't rejoice for you. I know so much better than you possibly can."

"Do you know then—why he—he—wants to marry me?"

She looked startled. "Why because—he—because he loves you, stupid!" she said after a minute.

"But why, Mother, I'm not pretty, am I?"

"Well, goodness knows, I've done my best, and you aren't so bad, Janet! You're too slender and colorless and you can't learn to do anything for yourself. You're quiet when you ought to smile and talk, but," she conceded, "your eyes are



In a panic I flung myself against him . . . "Janet," came Mother's voice sharply, "open the door at once!"

lovely, and there's a certain charm——"

"But why, Mother, if it's not for looks?" I persisted.

"Well," uncomfortably, "you're young. It counts, I think, with a man of Mr. Warner's type. You've had no affairs, and now—adays, many girls, mere children——"

SO THAT'S why," I interrupted quietly. "A reward for being good. I get Mr. Warner instead of what I've been learning to want for nineteen years."

"What is the matter with you, Janet? Don't try to act sophisticated! It doesn't fit you at all. Surely Mother knows best. I've planned everything so carefully. I'm even sacrificing myself to stay here because you fancied being married here." Mrs. Marsh, one of Mother's rich friends, was giving us her cottage. "I've slaved over your trousseau and it is lovely."

"I'd rather wear rags," I said bitterly. "I'd rather starve."

"Not another word!" Mother said furiously. "Go to your room and pack your books and think of your wicked ingratitude."

That was Mother. One moment treating me as if I were a bad child, the next expecting me to put away childish things, and not only childish things but all the gold and scarlet things of youth.

I sat down at my window, still clutching my thin shabby little book. Outside the October night was closing in. Above the slap of wind-driven rain on the window I could hear the roar of the waves. I am always afraid in storms. I shut my eyes to call up the comforting vision of hot sunshine on a still sea, nothing to dread, or fear, a safe loved place—and those strong arms, under my cheek a heart gaining in swiftness.

How silly to let my thoughts run on like that when I knew what was before me. I lighted the lamp. "No more of it," I said aloud. "And no more books like you." I took one last glance at the open page:

And one whose perplexed heart did evil foolishly—
A long while since and by some other sea.

I flung it across the room and took down my heavy coat.

The cold wet wind set my teeth chattering. I turned into the street that ended in a strip of sandy beach.



For a long time he fumbled with the clasp.
I tried to smile, but my lips were stiff.

People were hurrying past me bracing themselves against the gale. Lights were coming on here and there in windows. I went on and on. At last I put up my hands to brush back my flying hair. My face was wet. I was crying.

"Oh," the voice seemed not to belong to me, "they have me trapped, the two of them, trapped like an animal. Trapped! Trapped!"

I slid down on the wet sand. I was alone in a rocking world, with the dark and the storm. I sobbed, letting

myself go as I hadn't since childhood, cried for all my lovely shining dreams

Someone lifted me to my feet none too gently, thrust a flashlight in my face. "You'd drown quicker and easier if you jumped in." The man's husky voice was gruff, but every nerve in me quivered at the touch of his hands.

"What's the big idea hiding out here in the dark and wet? And the Governor or Supreme Court Judge, or whatever the old fellow is, waiting for you with his Rolls-Royce parked at the door. Probably all the police, and the fire department, and the lifeguards are looking by this time."

"Oh," I gasped. "I wish I had jumped in! I can't go up to the house like this! I won't go!"

"Who's the old fellow? What have you done to be so scared to death of him?"

"Scared to death, indeed! I like your nerve! I'm going to marry him in three more days." I was furious at myself for the way my nerves were quivering.

"Marry him. My God!"

"He is Robert Holden Warner, I'll have you know, Vice-President of the Central and Northern Railroad."

The man drew a long breath

WELL," he said unsteadily, "it must be a nerve-racking stunt to marry a railroad. You're a precious bit of property. Here—" he peeled off his slicker. "Don't know as there's much sense of it now. You couldn't get much wetter, but railroad stock is valuable."

I drew away from him. He yanked me back, and slipped the coat over my arms, buttoned it to my chin.

"Of all the nerve," I protested weakly. "I don't even know you."

"Oh, yes, you do." His mouth was at my ear. "You came to know me so well the other day that you'll never forget me, any more than I shall forget you. My name is James O'Meara. Call me Jimmie if you like."

"I'll call you nothing," I protested sharply. "You may be a hold-up man for all I know. What did you follow me here for anyway? How did you know I was here?"

"I've been watching you since you left the house. I gave you two hours for your cry. I—"

"What right?" I demanded. "What made you follow me?"

"What made me?" He laughed. "The thing that made me was—well, whatever it is that makes me want you in my arms again."

"I won't stay here to listen to your insulting—I'm going!"

"Don't be foolish! You're going home. No sense running wild in this storm."

He caught my arm again. Something in that touch shattered my self-control. Terrified, I wrenched my arm loose and struck him in the face with my clenched fist. I ran straight for the lighted street. Ran till my knees doubled up. But a man had stopped, was peering after me. Further on two men. There was a darker street leading back to the beach. I turned into it, glancing fearfully over my shoulder. Jimmie O'Meara was nowhere in sight. I stopped in the black shadow of a building. There was nothing to be done now, only to go home. Perhaps I could get in the back way and change my clothes. I had an impulse to throw off the hated slicker and leave it lying there in the dark. It would serve the impertinent fellow right if he never saw it again. I put my hands into the pockets, and touched a few loose cigarettes, matches, keys, a tiny steel wrench, a few pennies.

A shadow loomed over me

"Well," O'Meara said quietly, "if you're through punching my face and going through my pockets—"

I cowered back into my corner

"Come along now!" His hand grasped my shoulder. I tried frantically to pull away. He gave me a little shake.

"Don't be foolish. You won't get away again. If you try I'll shake you till your teeth chatter. Come along."

"Oh," I pleaded, "I'm sorry. Where are you taking me? Please, Mr. O'Meara, let me get out of your coat and I'll go straight home."

"Sure you'll go home!" He was striding along against the wind and rain, dragging me. At the very end of the street where the path was lost in sand he turned in at a little dark bungalow. With a final tug he pulled me protesting into the shelter of the little porch, then fumbled with a key.

I was rigid with fear. All the wild stories of crime I'd ever read came luridly to life in my brain.

He groped for the switch and the little low-ceilinged room was flooded with light. Clinging desperately to the door, I looked. A blackened fireplace, casement windows, a couch with tumbled cushions, a table littered with books and papers, shabby chairs covered with faded cretonne, work-basket, a drooping, dying fern in a pot, and thick dust and disorder everywhere—certainly not much there to frighten anyone.

"Go in," he ordered me. The wind was tearing at the windows.

"I'm afraid"

"Afraid! Afraid! Look at me"

I looked at his white, tired boyish face, his steady eyes, his big kind mouth. The rough flannel shirt plastered against his thin shoulders.

AFTER a long minute I stepped inside and closed the door after me.

"Your house?"

He nodded, watching me.

"But the work-basket and the cushions, and the dead fern?"

"My mother's."

"What if she sees me? She'll think"

"She'll know. She died a month ago."

"And you live here alone?"

"Yes."

"And cook and do everything?"

"Everything that's done."

"Why did you bring me here, Jimmie O'Meara? Did you mean to bring me here?"

"I did—for a purpose. A terrible purpose."

"Jimmie—"

"A terrible purpose. I'm going to leave you here alone for ten minutes. You'll want to wash your face. The bathroom's at the end of the hall. There must be a clean towel somewhere. You rummage around for it. Girls are good at rummaging. Then take the rest of the time to look through every corner of this little house, and see what you're escaping through Mr. Robert Holden Warner. If your dreams came true, you'd live in a place like this! Maybe it will make you happy to realize—" his voice came huskily, "maybe, you lovely little girl, this is the one thing in the world I can give you—happiness in knowing what you've escaped."

TREMBLING with queer excitement, I went from room to room of the lonely little house. It had the wistful air of a loved, cared-for child, wandering bewildered and lost, so pathetic in its dust and disorder.

I fluffed up the dejected couch pillows, straightened the rug, gathered up magazines from the window-sills, chairs and floor, and stacked them on the table; set the parched fern in the bathtub for first aid, consigned a jar full of dead goldenrod to the

[Turn to page 100]

Will
These
Footlight
Flappers
Become
Stars

?

Here
are
four
new
faces
on
Broadway.


Will
you
help
them
to
fame

?




DORIS EATON in "No
Other Girl" is
dancing her
way to star-
dom like her
sister Mary.

Alfred Cheney
Johnson photo




FAY WEST, last year a Follies' girl, won success in "Bye-Bye Barbara"—despite its short stay on Broadway—when the Fall season was still young.

Hizon Studio Photo



CLAIRE LUCE graduated from "Little Jessie James" last season to do her share in making "Dear Sir" this year the tuneful pretty-girl show that it is.

Richard Burke Photo



GABY FLEURY, as you may know, can punctuate thrillers like "Whispering Wires" with smiles, and again proves herself a comedienne of rare personality in "Werewolf."

White Studio Photo

*"Give Me a Chance at 'em.
I Can Always Hypnotize
Them." This Was
McFadden's
Boast.*



In the Mountains Anything Can Happen

SOMEHOW a fellow gets sort of rough, knocking around the mountains the way I do. Nature's a funny thing that way. All my life I've known the mountain folk—that is, after I left college. Before that I was a city chap. I came to California to try a year of the mountain climate, and those mountains just reached out and gathered me in. My lungs were healed in six months, but the mountains never let go, and—I've been here ever since.

I've often wondered what it is those mountains do to a man. Sort of scrape off the veneer of civilization, I guess. You know you can take a piece of defective wood, spread a veneer over it, polish it up and make a piece of furniture that'll last a lifetime in the city. Out here in the hills, veneer doesn't stand up. No, sir, the

oak that stands in the Loma Paloma Pass doesn't have any veneer, nor any slick polish. It's covered with good, honest rough bark, and it stands the weather. If there was any rot in the heart of that oak, the bark might cover it for a while, but it wouldn't last.

Well, somehow it's that way with men out here. Many a time I've seen a fellow come out from the city, all polish and veneer, but it wouldn't be over a week or two until that coating was all scratched off and you could see the real wood right underneath.

TAKE J. Loring McFadden for instance.

He sure had enough polish for a dozen men. All smooth shiny veneer. Slick at it, too. He could sit in the lobby of the hotel at San Bonita and just sort of

hypnotize the whole crowd. He was smooth, all right; smooth in the ways of the city. Had a sort of a gift of making men do what he wanted them to.

A "super-salesman," he called himself. He could read most men just like I can read trail—knew how to approach them to make them do what he wanted.

"Let me talk with a man five minutes, and I can 'sell' him on anything I want," he used to say.

I first met him when he took over the Blue Gulch mine. He had all the stock. "Underwritten it," was the way he described the deal. When he made his first trip in to see the mine, he brought Oscar Dunning with him. I acted as guide and packed a string into the hills for them.

I could tell right from the first that they didn't either one of them know anything about the hills. Dunning didn't make any secret about it. He was one of those fellows who always keep in the background. McFadden was different. He sort of patronized those mountains. He seemed to think he could "sell" them too.

HE HAD a black mustache and a gleaming gold tooth. He was proud of that gold tooth. "Hypnotizes 'em," he would say. When he was trying to be agreeable he'd flash a smile and let that gold tooth gleam.

I packed the fellows into the mine just like I was hired to. I didn't chum around any with them. Dunning kept in the background, and McFadden didn't pay any attention to me. As far as he was concerned, I was a servant—just like one of the horses. I didn't have any money to invest in Blue Gulch Mining stock, so why should he waste his time on me? I didn't see the flash of that gold tooth more than once on the whole trip to the mine.

Dunning was sort of a shadow to McFadden. Kind of a traveling echo. What McFadden did, Dunning tried to do. He was going to sell stock under McFadden. He seemed to think McFadden was a kind of a god.

"I've got the boy sold on me, clean hypnotized," says McFadden to me one day. Not that he was trying to be sociable, but just boasting out loud to me like he might talk to a horse. He didn't expect me to say anything back, so I just kept quiet. It was true, though McFadden only needed to crook his little finger and Dunning jumped.

They met Jean at the mining camp.

You wouldn't expect that McFadden would fall for a girl of Jean's type, but he did. She kept the post office at the mine, living with her mother, and all the men worshipped the ground she walked on. She was a sure enough angel.

Bert Sprague had the inside track. He'd been engaged to Jean ever since summer. They would have been married in the spring if McFadden hadn't shown up that fall.

Somehow Jean couldn't see through McFadden. Poor

kid! She couldn't see anything underneath that shiny veneer. He kept flashing that gold tooth, twisting his mustache, and talking, talking, talking—always talking, smooth, slick.

"Give me a chance at 'em and I can hypnotize 'em," he used to say.

He'd have rushed Jean off her feet and married her right then and there, if it hadn't been for her promise to Bert Sprague. Girls like Jean don't break engagements—not in the mountains. Bert wouldn't let her go—to marry McFadden.

"Wait a year," Bert said. "Wait a year and see if you still like this fellow. If you do I'll quit, but just wait a year."

Jean was willing.

McFadden wouldn't wait.

One day Bert started off on a prospecting trip over in the Pedra Blanca country. That country's bad. It's full of caves in a limestone formation, with lots of loose soil on top. Big slides come down over those limestone cliffs without any warning. A man can get swept off the trail or buried under half a mountainside of dirt as easy as not. Then there's the old abandoned mining shafts. It's a bad country.

BERT hadn't been gone very long, when McFadden and Dunning went on a fishing trip up the Pedra Blanca Creek. There's great fishing up there. Gamiest trout in the world. Water's so cold you can't hold them in your hand after you catch them, and they are as black as the ace of spades. Some trout!

They came back in about a week—looking kind of funny. Somehow we got to worrying about Bert Sprague. It was nothing that they said—just the way they acted. We sort of feel things up here in the mountains.

We started out to trail Bert, and then the first snows came on with a rush. You know what it's like here in the California mountains. They have all kinds of climate in this state. Down low they grow palm trees, oranges and lemons—up high they have snow storms, and bad ones at that. Many a time I've stood in an orange orchard in the middle of winter—or summer too, for that matter—when the air was so sweet and warm it reminded you of liquid sunshine, and looked at the snow-covered mountain tops not thirty miles away.

NO, WE never found Bert. There's no use hunting in those mountain canyons when the snow comes. It sweeps down from the high peaks and drifts into them thirty feet deep.

Jean married McFadden along about Christmas. Then people got to talking. Somehow we feel things up in the mountains.

The next thing we knew Dunning skipped. He snowshoed down to the head of the pass, got a horse at the half-way house, and that's the last we ever heard of him.

Tell Us About It.

DID YOU like the last issue of SMART SET?

Don't you think this one is even better?

Whether you do or not, sit down and write us a letter. We want to know what stories you like best.

We'll give twenty-five dollars for the best letter criticizing the NOVEMBER issue; ten dollars for the second best; and five dollars for the third best. All letters must be received before noon of November fifteenth. Prizes will be awarded December 1, 1924. The Editors will be the Judges.



.... You could just hear those mountains keeping quiet and waiting. "Don't those slides ever cover up them caves?" he asked.

After he'd gone, McFadden got to talking about how funny Dunning had been acting lately. He figured Dunning must have something on his mind. After that it wasn't but a little while until McFadden got to recalling about how funny Dunning acted one night out in the Pedra Blanca, and how he remembered a shot he'd heard that afternoon. Finally he come right out with it. Putting two and two together the way he'd done, he came to the conclusion that Dunning had murdered Bert.

Oh yes, he got all worked up over it. He even got some snowshoes and went down to the county seat and swore out a warrant for Dunning's arrest.

That kept McFadden's skirts clear.

People didn't say much. They couldn't till Bert's body was found. We didn't even know but what he might have slipped on the trail. That's a bad trail over in that Pedra Blanca. It's a bad country. I guess we did a lot of *thinking*, though. I know I did.

Then came early spring and McFadden and his bride left. They had to go East to sell the stock in the mine. McFadden had sold a lot to people around the county. He made it sound pretty good. No large sales; just what he could get. "Pikin' money," he called it, but it was all the people had. He was going East after the "big money."

Jean wrote to her mother off and on for a few months, and then the letters quit. Jean never was much of a hand to whimper.

That summer I got to wandering around the Pedra Blanca country quite a bit. I didn't find anything.



The year after that I took a bunch of tenderfeet into that Pedra Blanca country on a fishing trip. They'd heard about those big, black trout and nothing would do but in they must go—right into the heart of the Pedra Blanca Country.

I stumbled on it by accident. It wasn't so far from the trail either. Right in one of those caves washed by the limestone. Sure—Bert Sprague's skeleton. I knew it all right. Some of the clothes were left. The skull had a bullet hole right in the center of [Turn to page 88]



"Dapper Don" Collins

"As One Crook to

*You Might Call This
An Old Crook
Might Find it an*

By John A.

has been ruined. His prison term is but a small part of his penalty.

But the thief who prefers to use his ability against the law, who knowingly and through his own desire would rather be a successful crook than a successful honest man, what of him? Can he manage to make it pay? I doubt it.

In a quarter of a century of newspaper work and fiction writing, I have met many crooks of all grades—from the crooked banker to the rough and desperate hold-up man.

One, now an old man, whose name was known from coast to coast among confidence men, suddenly turned honest eight years ago, although he was penniless and married. He had been a thief from boyhood and had no other profession. His wife went to work in a big department store. They lived in a small room in Stuyvesant Square, New York City, getting their meals from a one-ring gas burner perched on top of their trunk.

FOR sheer courage, I have seldom seen the equal of the struggle of this man and woman to go straight and stay straight. I lived with them for two weeks. They are still going straight and are still poor, but husband and wife know what it is to answer a knock on their door without fear filling their hearts. They know what it means to sleep soundly and peacefully.

The gentlemen of the underworld—the so-called high class crooks—will know the man I am writing of, if I refer to him simply as Bert. As a cheat in cards, as a swindler in fake mines and oil wells, he had no equal. He and his wife lived in luxury for years on his "earnings." Silks and satins and diamonds were hers.

But she prefers the job in the department store and goes about it with a laugh and smile always, a little bit of a woman with plenty of gray in her once brown hair.

I staked her husband to the price of a pair of shoes. He was literally on his uppers, looking for a job. He got the job through a publisher who had known him as a boy—not much of a job, but honest work.

Here is the answer to why Bert and his "missus" straightened out in their silver years.

"You can cheat the cards and you can cheat your fellow-man indefinitely," said Bert, "but you can't cheat destiny, and it is the destiny of every crook to make at least one bad slip-up. As I grew older, I began to fear that one mistake that was coming to me. I began to

DOES it pay to be dishonest?

This question might best be answered by the man who is a thief by preference and by profession. The bank teller or cashier, who nibbles away at the money in the custody of his institution and finally reaches a point where he can no longer hide his speculations, would cry out bitterly that dishonesty does not pay. His friends desert him, shame comes to his wife and children, perhaps to his fond parents. A good name

Another"

*Just The Story of
— or You
Inspiring Revelation.*

Moroso

dread it. I saw the jail doors waiting for me. No, I didn't lose my nerve exactly, but I had always lived with crooks and had seen the best of them landed by the police. I did not want to die in prison. There was only one way to avoid that, and we took it. We turned honest and we are staying honest.

"Never mind what the young fellows say, the ones who are getting away with it, the ones who think that down at police headquarters there is only a collection of human statuary. The only sure way in life is the honest way. You can't measure the wealth you have in a clean conscience. It is everything that means for comfort and peace of mind, contentment."

BERT was one of the ablest card sharps in the country in his time. He employed two "come-on" men to work the transcontinental trains. They were handsome, engaging chaps, good story tellers, presumably young business men. They would find a traveling rich man, make his acquaintance, suggest whist or poker. Bert, the picture of dignity, a man of the old-fashioned type in dress and manners, would be coaxed into the game.

How trusting and simple are the honest in the hands of such crooks! With the rich man's money all taken from him, Bert accepts his check. The stakes are high and the victim has lost all of his cash. He is journeying to a Western city to close a cash deal in ranch property. He is eager to win his money back.

The check is finally used up.

"Perhaps you would rather have me tear up the check," suggests Bert. "I'm stopping off at your town and you can let me have it in cash if you don't want the check to go through."

With this suggestion, Bert tears up the check and throws it from the car window. Only he doesn't do that. He tears up a blank check. His purpose is to keep the victim from telegraphing or telephoning his bank and telling the cashier not to honor the check should he think he had fallen into the hands of sharpers. It was a simple trick and worked.

The fool and his money are parted.

Easy come, easy go. Bert got thousands upon thousands



Bert, the former confidence man.

ands of dollars dishonestly, but none of it stuck to him. Broke and fearful, he dropped the game and is glad of it.

IN CONTRAST is Don Collins, now in prison on Blackwell's Island. "Dapper Don," they call him in the underworld, a man just reaching forty, immaculate in dress, polished in manner, handsome as a matinee idol. He would make a fortune in the movies. His personal charm, his keen intelligence, and the actual mental effort necessary to be a crook and keep a half-lap ahead of the police, should have made him a brilliant figure in honest life. One may [Turn to page 92]

Gabrielle

of the Red Kimono

The Author Wants You To Write To Her

Here is a Telegram from the Author

EDITOR, SMART SET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

CERTAINLY GABRIELLE'S STORY IS EVERY
WORD TRUE. I REPORTED THE CASE AND HEARD
ALL THE TESTIMONY. I FOLLOWED UP THE
LATER EVENTS AND THEY ARE TOO TRAGIC TO
BE FORGOTTEN.

ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHN
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

FOR twelve years I have wanted to write the story of Gabrielle of the red kimono.

But it is such a bitter story. Each time my heart has failed me.

And still it goes on demanding to be told—demanding.

I do not know where Gabrielle is now. Wherever she is, if she should happen to read this story, perhaps she will know that every hand was not against her, and that all women are not like Louise Fontane. There were many who would have tried to help her—if they had known in time. If they had known in time.

(MRS.) ADELA ROGERS ST. JOHN.

ABE MAXWELL, the little fat jeweler, bald and perspiring in the heavy heat of mid-afternoon, pulled out the tray of wedding rings and placed them carefully on the counter. His smile was knowing, ingratiating, a little sentimental—the smile he always wore when selling wedding rings. Wedding rings were an important part of his trade, in the little Main Street jewelry store, and Abe Maxwell had a sense of the fitness of things.

The blond young man ignored his advances with a cold, deliberate eye. In the dimness of the little store—

surely it was unnecessary to burn electricity in mid-afternoon—his blondness had a remarkable quality of brightness. The golden shine of his carefully brushed hair, the red and white of his freshly shaven cheeks, the glint of his light blue eyes, made for a type of good looks not unknown to Abe Maxwell.

A prosperous looking young man, as well as a handsome one, the jeweler noted with approval. The cut of his elaborately belted, excessively pleated coat, the richness and color of his silk tie, the wide stripes of his silk shirt, spoke of money lavishly spent. A good customer, surely, though there was something in the hard set of the lips that warned Mr. Maxwell not to raise the scale of his price, as—to be entirely truthful—he had been known to do at the sight of wealthy patrons.

Mr. Maxwell was placing several of his very best wedding rings on a small square of purple velvet, where they shone to the best advantage, when a lady came quietly through the open door.

Business was good this afternoon. Mr. Maxwell began to make beaming and apologetic little bows in her direction. First, a blond young man wearing a six dollar tie, and now a lady in a sealskin coat. He was torn between the two of them. Elegant sealskin it was,



Gabrielle

too, the best skins, lavishly used, but of an old-fashioned cut. And the big, flat black muff—expensive also, but out of date.

Fortunately, she did not seem in a hurry. She stood very calm and still, her strange, long, somber eyes resting quietly upon Mr. Maxwell's other customer, who had slipped a wedding ring on his little finger and was admiring it. Still, the jeweler caught a glimpse of large diamond earrings under the shadow of her dusky hair. Diamonds were more profitable than wedding rings.

Just then the lady spoke, quietly, in a rich, expressionless voice. One word escaped her lips—"Howard."

The man turned with incredible swiftness. "You——" he said, and made a slight movement with his hand.

The woman never moved, but something tore a jagged hole in her sealskin muff, sang through the air and disappeared in the blond young man's vest just above his watch fob. The muff dropped and the little black automatic showed in all its ugliness, spitting death—twice three, four, five, six times. The hand that held it was



"I shot him because he was going to be married and go on living on my money."

bare but Mr. Maxwell, frozen behind his counter with a nauseous fear, saw—as a man sees trivial and incongruous things upon his death-bed—the glitter and glint of diamonds upon it.

Main Street knows shots when it hears them. Less than twenty yards away, a traffic cop on his corner heard those six swift reports and moved with great rapidity.

But there was no hurry. The blond young man, propped against Mr. Maxwell's counter and ruining his imitation Persian rug, was beyond anything that a traffic policeman could do. The woman in sealskin was running the muzzle of her empty automatic through a tray of wedding rings, her face still calm beneath an icy blanket of tears.

As soon as the policeman appeared, Abe Maxwell began to gibber. His mind was circling like a wounded pigeon. One thing was within his comprehension—she had certainly spoiled the sale of a wedding ring for Abe Maxwell.

man yet." His wrinkled old face, like fine parchment, smiled down at her.

THIS time it took longer for Gabrielle's smile to come. But she managed it at last. "Well," she said, "I am glad you think so."

He went away, bawling at the people who still lingered about, staring at the round, black figure sitting alone at the big table. Quite alone. They began to struggle out, looking back over their shoulders at her. Through the open windows, the murmur of the crowd that packed the street for a block each way could be heard like the distant murmur of a mighty sea.

The clock above the dirty water cooler said twenty minutes past two. A man came out of the judge's chamber, laughing loudly, and in the instant that the door was swung wide, Gabrielle saw the old judge within, his fat face red with laughter, his tufts of white hair standing up in wild disorder. In one corner, the assistant district attorney—the one who had denounced

DEPARTMENT Seventeen of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County was waiting for the jury.

And waiting for a murder jury is the weariest work in the world.

As the twelve men filed out of the box and into the little room with the ground glass door, Gabrielle said to the grizzled deputy beside her, "Can I stay here?"

"Sure, if you want to. But you'd better go back to the jail. It'll take them quite a while."

Gabrielle looked up at him with that deep, dimpled smile of hers.

"How long you think it going to be, Señor Auguerre?"

"Can't tell."

"Come on now," said Gabrielle, patting his open hand on the big table. "Tell me how long it was last time you have this kind of trial here?"

"Three days."

Gabrielle wilted in her chair, her full breast lifting on a long, quivering breath of panic.

"Three — days? Waiting to know? Oh, they must not—they must not do that to me." She began to tremble.

"You'll get used to it," said the old deputy, spitting tobacco juice accurately into the big, shining cuspidor.

"Anyway, it ain't going to be that long with you. Don't you get all worked up. Never knew a jury to convict a pretty wo-

her so bitterly in his speech to the jury—stood idly smoking a cigarette.

Gabrielle's great eyes—strange eyes of a deep topaz that grew wholly black as the pupil dilated—rested on him, darkening, narrowing. She hated him. He wasn't fair. To stand up and say things like that about her when she dared not speak. To attack a woman when she was down. Gabrielle made a swift little prayer that he would be eternally damned. And then her eyes dropped and she took it back.

He didn't understand.

He felt her eyes on him and shuffled nervously.

Gabrielle looked toward the glass door of the jury room. Her heart stopped beating. A grotesque shadow had appeared upon it—a distorted arm raised, a gigantic finger pointing. Gabrielle cowered in her chair. What was in that room? Some demon. Holy Mother, what were they doing in there?

Deciding whether she should live—or die. A weary bitterness descended upon her face. Well, she didn't want to live. That was sure enough. But she did not want to be hanged—hanged by the neck until dead.

One of her dimpled hands went up and touched her young, firm throat. She buried her head

Someone sat down beside her, and she looked up, suspicious, defiant. Then her quick, soft smile came. It was one of her lawyers, the young one, with the nice, round face.

"See here," he said, with his boyish, embarrassed smile, "why don't you go back to the jail? No good waiting around here. We'll send for you as soon as we know anything. Those old codgers will have to talk and stew just so long. Mr. Dennison thinks they'll be out about two hours."

He mentioned the name of his chief, the criminal lawyer who had defended her, in an awed voice.

At that very moment, over a green topped bridge table, three exquisitely gowned ladies were loudly admiring pretty little Mrs. Dennison's lovely new rings. Such fine, white stones. Mrs. Dennison beamed proudly. Her husband had given them to her. They were beautiful, weren't they?

"Well," said Gabrielle, "I do not want to go back alone to that jail. It would be worse. Please, you let me stay here? I will be good and quiet and not bother anyone."

The young lawyer nodded, flushing.

What nerve! He wondered what he would be doing if that jury were settling his fate. And how beauti-

As they looked . . . the shadow of a hand fell on the glass of the door of the jury-room.



for a moment in her hands, then flung it up. She would not let that man who had called her vile names see her afraid. But she was afraid.

She closed her burning eyes and tried to pray. God was above all these people. God was above that judge. Let God look into her heart.

After she had prayed a long, long time, she looked at the clock. It was half past two. Three days. She could not.

ful she was. He marvelled, as he had marvelled every day during the two weeks of the trial, at the soft, undulating charm of her dimpled arms and neck, her lovely figure. The pupils of her eyes had contracted again, and they glowed at him, all golden, soft—pleading, cozening eyes. Beneath the thick mop of her hair—and oddly there was no gold in her hair, it was all black, black and warm—her face was oval and olive-tinted, with a round, impudent nose, and a firm chin. Her

upper lip had real beauty, where it curved down and rested on the full lower one.

He was a very young lawyer, and when Mr. Dennison had taken the case and had told him baldly who and what manner of woman Gabrielle was, he had pictured a plump blonde person in a red kimono, and very high heeled red slippers. Of course he realized that she wouldn't wear her kimono in court. That was figurative.

True, she wore her clothes—a plain, dark blue suit and a still plainer white shirt waist—awkwardly, as though it were an unaccustomed garb. But there was a soft, pleading, gentle something about her that he did not understand.

He looked at the clock. A quarter to three. The jury couldn't be long. While Gabrielle was on the witness stand, under cross examination, the young lawyer had seen his chief give two or three quick nods of satisfaction. After that he lost interest in the case.

"She's won her own ball-game," he said crisply.

During direct examination she had been so quiet, so sad. When she faced the jury, she dropped her eyes, so that only the satiny lids showed, but the tears crept from beneath them, one by one, and slipped unheeded down her cheeks.

BUT the district attorney had taken it into his head to browbeat her. What a fool he was. But of course district attorneys were seldom good lawyers. A good lawyer couldn't afford to be district attorney. This one had a particularly unfortunate, aggressive manner and a nasty temper, not too well under control. He resented Gabrielle. He resented the strange, pathetic sort of impression she had made on people. After all, the woman was what she was. Because she happened to be good looking was no reason for trying to make a Joan of Arc of the creature. He intended to show them plainly enough what a decent man thought of that kind of women.

"Your name?" he snapped at her.

"My name is Gabrielle."

"Well, what's the rest of it?"

"I—I am not sure, señor. In New Orleans, they call me Gabrielle d'Or."

"Your business?"

For the first time Gabrielle raised her eyes, all the gold of them on fire. "You know well enough what my business was, señor. It has been told often enough in this courtroom. And anyway, probably you recognize it without I tell you."

Her rich, husky voice, with its liquid Spanish note, was beginning to ring out.

"You admit that you shot Howard Blaine?"

"I shot him. I shot him. I say so many times."

"And you shot him because you found out he was going to marry another woman, didn't you?"

"No, that was not the reason."

DENNISON looked up quickly, under his knit, intent brows. But Gabrielle was not looking at him. She was looking straight at the district attorney, and her eyes were entirely black now and blazing. Once, in a circus the young lawyer had seen a leopard turn on its trainer, a tame, obedient leopard it had been, but when it turned its eyes looked exactly as Gabrielle's eyes looked now.

"What was the reason?" The district attorney spat it at her contemptuously. Every intonation of his voice gave the lie to her words. But Dennison smiled suddenly. He would not have asked that question, had he been the district attorney.

"I shot him because he was going to get married and go on living on my money. He was buying that wedding ring—for her—with money I earn for him."

The courtroom stiffened to attention.

"Look here, my good woman." Gabrielle's face went a slow, dark crimson, for the first time in all those weary days. "Let's get at the truth about this thing. I know it's hard for a woman like you to tell the truth."

The young lawyer looked sidewise at Dennison. Wasn't he going to protect his client from that sort of insult? But Dennison was smiling a pleased smile behind his hand.

"As a matter of fact, didn't you know that Blaine intended to leave you? Didn't you know that he left New Or-

leans to get rid of you? And isn't it true that jealousy prompted you to empty every bullet in your gun into him when you caught him?"

GABRIELLE leaned forward, her face close to his, a terrible scorn in her eyes. "No, that is not true. Not one word. The truth? I tell you the truth, you man. He did not intend to leave me. He came to Los Angeles to get married so I will not know it. But he was coming back."

"What makes you think so?"

"If he was not coming back, he would have taken my diamonds with him."

"Then, if you were so sure he was coming back, Miss Gabrielle, why did you follow him and kill him on sight, without a word? What difference did it make to you—in your business—whether he was married or not?"

The answer came low and [Turn to page 102]

Is Marriage An Aid to Success?

Should a young man make a success before he marries?

Or should he marry and let his wife help him succeed?

Does early marriage help him, or does it hold him back?

What do you think?

How are you working out your problem? Are you doing it alone? Or did you marry the only girl in the world so you could work your problems out together? Or did you marry a butterfly and find her holding you back?

Did you marry a rich man? Are you happy? Are you a part of his life or just a fixture in his home?

Did you marry a poor man? Are you a part of his life? Do you help him carry his business worries. Have you helped him to get ahead? Has the struggle drawn you closer together?

We do not want to treat this question in a general way, but we want you to write us your own opinion and tell us what your experience has been.

We will publish one story each month by one of our readers telling what his or her experience has been and what conclusion should be drawn from it. These stories are sure to be interesting. We will pay fifty dollars for each story of not more than 2,000 words accepted for publication.

What is your opinion?

*The End of a
Strange Story
of a Life
Which Was
Guided by
Music*

"I'm thirty years old . . . I
want to marry, Matthew."



Heart Broken MELODY

What Happened Before:

EVEN as a little fellow it had been Matthew Grail's dream to be a great musician. And when the town's one music teacher, Miss Penny, offered to give him lessons on the violin free of charge, his cup seemed overflowing. Years before, Miss Penny had gone to New York to study under the renowned Herman Schubert, and had been forced to return to care for her aged mother. Now she saw a chance of realizing her own frustrated hopes in Matthew.

Came the time for Matthew to study under the great maestro. He, too, was torn by the same overwhelming forces—ambition and duty. In the end, he bade good-by to the old familiar landmarks of home, to the parents whose fondest hope was that the Grail land should always be tilled by one of the Grail name.

In the city, he discovered the path to fame a thorny

one. But he fell in love with petite, blue-eyed Minna Bonner, daughter of the piano-tuner where he sought lodging, and forgot his thwarted career in complete captivation to her charms. Minna and Matthew had one stormy scene, however, in which Minna believed herself greatly insulted because Matthew could not find the means to marry her immediately.

Something very sweet and beautiful had died in Minna, the tender flower of a first love. Sick at heart, Matthew at last listened to the voice of duty. He returned home to make smooth the last days of his widowed mother.

In the same town, "Crow" Wellman, a dark-skinned masculine woman, managed with capable hands her broad, productive acres. There Matthew finally found himself overseer. But the longing for Minna could not be stilled—despite all "Crow's" efforts to keep him happy in his job. Months passed. In the end, Matthew

decided to heed the cry of his heart and beg Minna to marry him.

A much-changed Minna greeted him on his return; a hardened child, who had somehow found a foothold in the movies.

"It's too late for that, Matt," she told him sadly. "I can't marry you now. I want to be a movie star. I've grown used to lots of money."

LIFE is a melody and the dominant notes of mine were now the chords of pain.

Minna had refused me. The next day when I called at her apartment, her friend told me that Minna had gone away, left town. She did not know where or when she would return. I did not believe it. Minna was only trying to avoid me, because deep in her heart she cared. But as the days went by and Minna still refused to see me, I realized that her decision was unalterable.

The city suddenly became intolerable. Only under the healing blue of the wide sky, in the green of the wind-swept fields could I hope to regain any measure of peace. I determined to leave and return to Wellman's.

"Crow" welcomed me with frank pleasure.

"I'm glad you're back and Uncle Ike will be delighted." She was superintending the crating of some early strawberries.

"The transient labor we get these days is about worthless," she went on. Her dark face flushed with anger as she cursed the big Swede who was shiftlessly loading a motor truck with the berries.

"I'm here for a good long stay," I said soberly, after a short pause.

"Till next cold weather, eh?" she laughed and jogged me with her elbow.

"No," I laughed, "longer than that."

She gave me a curious look.

"Something has happened to you."

I offered no explanation.

She shrugged her shoulders. "Well, at any rate I'm glad you're back."

I noticed later that she had discarded the corduroy breeches and wore a calico dress. In it she looked large and broad of hip, a magnificent peasant figure, symbolic of the soil. I watched her curiously. In skirts she was strange, unfamiliar. I wondered why she had changed and if by any chance it was on my account.

WHEN old Ike Wellman drove over later I was genuinely glad to see him. We talked crops, radio and politics.

"Crow" was unusually quiet during supper. She took no part in our talk, but sat and smoked.

"Don't start any work till tomorrow, Matt," she said to me as I started for the barn. "It's a fine night. Let's drive into Boleton and go to a movie."

Old Ike stared at her. "What's come over you, Letty? Getting all dressed up and wanting to go to the movies."

"That's just the trouble with life on a farm," she answered. "It's dull and isolated. The young men

won't stay." She glanced at me. "It's bad enough when people are poor and rundown like the Frosts, but we have plenty of money and should enjoy it."

"I'm not objecting," said old Ike. "I was only thinking."

"I'll get my coat." In the doorway "Crow" turned anxiously toward me. "You'd like to go, wouldn't you, Matt?"

"Very much," I answered.

When she had gone the old man said to me, "I don't know what's got into Letty of late. Ever since you left nothing around the place is clean or ship-shape enough. She sent to New York for a lot of dresses—and the way she goes for the Swede berry pickers!" He threw me a sly glance.

"Want to come along, Uncle Ike." In her fur-colored coat "Crow" looked handsome.

"No, drop me off at my place. I'm in the middle of a most interesting Sanskrit copy of the 'Institutes of Manu.' Drop around in the morning, Matt. I've business for you with the Frosts."

We left the old man in front of his big white house.

"Crow" turned the car on to the main road and threw it into high gear. It was a high-powered roadster and the reckless speed at which she drove alarmed me. I remonstrated with her.

"I'm mad for speed." Her strong hands were on the wheel, her stern face set with determination. "I've been arrested twice for racing, but I can't help it. Something wild gets in my blood, I want to tear along like a world crashing through infinity. Sometime I know it will get me, but I can't stop." She swung crazily around a curve, her black eyes gleaming with excitement. "After a while," she said through set teeth, "you'll get used to me, have confidence in me. I am really a careful driver. You can trust me."

"I'm not afraid for myself," I answered. "I was

thinking of you." I looked at her admiringly.

Her lips parted in a half smile. She did not speak again till we reached Boleton.

ILIVED on the Wellman place two years. Gradually much of the control of the two estates fell into my hands. Both old Ike and his niece had tested me and placed implicit confidence in me. In spite of her efficiency, "Crow" found that the farm yielded more results with me in charge, especially with the labor we were able to recruit.

After the first few weeks of my return, "Crow" made few changes in her way of living and gradually relapsed into her old habits. She had bought expensive new clothes in New York and wore them with a certain temerity, in order, I was sure, to please me; but when she saw that apparently I paid no attention to them, she gave up making the effort.

I could not help but see that in her way "Crow" was in love with me; but she was too practical to ever give way to sentimentality. Her heart was in her farm. Except for the work and motoring we had no common

Have You a Story?

DID it ever occur to you that you might write a story? I do not mean fiction. Isn't there something of interest which you know and which might interest others? Perhaps some legend centres about your home town. Perhaps you know a story of love and sacrifice.

If you do know such a story, sit down and write it. Perhaps you may help us in our search for the spirit of life. Tell your story simply. Make it interesting. Write in the first person, and give us the facts just as they came to you. And then, if it sounds good when you read it over, mail it to SMART SET.

bond of mutual interest and no really congenial tastes. She was a woman uninterested in petty gossip and too active physically to have much time or energy for books. She went to bed at nine and was up at five busy with her chores.

I found my greatest pleasure in my violin and in the companionship of old Ike Wellman.

But though the days were full and the evenings not dull, often a gnawing, indefinable loneliness seized me. At these times I would drive down to the Frost farm, my pockets filled with apples or candy. The affection of the youngsters was a diversion, a consolation. There was a new baby. It was my favorite. I could sit for hours and rock it in my arms and dream and think.

"You ought to have one of your own," Flora often laughed.

"I wish I had." It was true. The desire for a child, a son of my own, became a definite longing. A son would carry out all the dreams I had failed to make come true. My son would become the great musician I had failed to be.

One afternoon as "Crow" and I were driving back from Boleton, the three older Frost children ran out into the road to greet me.

"Crow" stopped the car and glanced curiously at the children. They swarmed over me, pillaging my pockets and covering me with sticky kisses.

"Candy! Candy!" they shouted.

"None today," I said regretfully. I had somehow forgotten them. Their faces fell.

"Next time double as much," I consoled.

They climbed off the car reconciled.

"Crow" sat as if undecided what to do. Then she turned to me. "I never knew you were so popular with the children."

"I'll make you love me again," cried Minna. "Oh, Matt, don't leave me here all alone. Don't leave me!"

"They're grateful for very little." I was embarrassed.

"No, children love very wisely," she replied. "I like them so much, but I'm afraid of them. I don't know how to make friends with them." She looked down wistfully at the three round, bright faces.

"Do you really want to know how to make friends with them?" I laughed.

"Yes."

"Tell them to get in the car, drive into Boleton and buy them each ten cents' worth of candy. They'll be your devoted slaves for life."

"Really," she said pleased. "Will you ask them?"

"I'll ask their mother." I shouted my request to Mrs. Frost who stood in the kitchen doorway with the baby in her arms. She nodded her consent and the three youngsters climbed into the car.

FROM that day on "Crow" and I had a third common bond of interest—the Frost children, and the baby in particular.

Old Ike, I knew, watched the progress of the affair between his niece and myself with the greatest longing and hope. He was too shrewd a student of human nature not to realize that nothing could be done to foster or bring about the end he desired.

I knew that the old man had grown to feel a warm



and deep liking for me, as well as a respect for my ability. He had once told me I was the only man he would like to see his niece marry. He realized how much there was to stand in the way of such a union; the lack of a strong, overmastering love, Letty's unattractive masculine ways, the fact that she was a few years older than I. But he reasoned that those difficulties would be automatically adjusted if Letty and I should marry and have a child.

ONE day, as I was coming toward the barn, I met "Crow." She had a kitten in her hands. The mother cat followed meowing piteously.

"It's been kicked by a horse, poor little thing!" I had never before heard her voice so gentle. "I'm afraid it's badly hurt."

"Let me see it." I took it from her hands and looked at it. "Yes, it's pretty badly crushed. We'd better—"

"Must we?" Her eyes filled with tears, her firm lip quivered.

Her tears amazed me. I had never before seen her touched by any softness of emotion.

"There's chloroform in the house. I'll get it," she choked.

She brought it to me, then picking up the mother cat carried it away. I had never liked her so well as at that moment. It was as if until then I had not really known her. It touched me to think that for all her gruff, rude ways, at heart she was tender and a woman.

I felt almost awkward as I came upon her later sitting on the porch. Her eyes were still wet and misty.

She stopped me. "Matt, I want to talk to you. Things between us must come to a show-down." I saw that she was very pale. The strained expression on her

face startled me by its look of intent whiteness.

"What's wrong," I asked.

"Don't think me mad or brazen." It was almost as if she had to tear the words from her throat. "But I've come to a decision. I'm thirty years old. I thought I'd never want to marry, but I do. I've been playing with that Frost baby and it awakened something in me. I want to marry, Matthew."

"You pay me a high honor," I said gravely.

"You are under no obligation to accept, but it would make it hard for us both—if you refuse." Her face flushed a deep red. "You have made me love you, Matt. It was not until I saw you with the Frost kid—dies that I knew."

I wanted to speak, but I couldn't.

HER lips trembled, but she went on speaking with greater control. "I have—something to offer you, Matt. You like it here. Besides, our marriage would be built on a firm foundation, mutual respect and a love and desire for children. It may not be romantic, but it's sound and sane. There would be fewer divorces if people looked on marriage from this angle."

Her voice sank almost to a whisper.

"I am a woman grown. I know my own mind. You have seen me exactly as I am. I have done nothing to attract or beguile you. I am wealthy, that you know, and any children I may have will inherit Uncle Ike's fortune as well as my own."

I stood looking at her. The sunset glow fell on her parted black hair, on the V of her blouse open at the strong column of her throat.

"I do not love you, Letty."

[Turn to page 106]

After all, what did the music amount to beside my boy? . . . I was beginning to realize at last that love was the one thing that really counted.



The Street Called Broadway



*How I
Came
Face to
Face
With the
Meaning
of
WHITE
MIDNIGHT*

"I'll keep you under lock and key, if necessary," he said. "When this thing blows over you can go back."

A STREET called Broadway! I shall never forget how one summer night it became the glittering pathway of my dreams and desires; how like a fascinating magician its twinkling golden glamor cast a spell upon me.

My heart fluttered fast, as arm-in-arm Dad and I came out of a theater and became a part of the gay, colorful rush and play of New York. The pretty girls; smart looking men; the alluring shop windows; and the unending stream of cars flowing back and forth like shimmering shadows in the fairyland of lights brought the breath through my lips in startled wonder.

It was hard to keep from showing how I felt. I

didn't dare let Dad find out how Broadway was affecting me. He was very strict, and had taken me along on a business trip only at my tearful insistence. He had declared that New York was a bad place for an impressionable motherless nineteen-year-old girl. If he had read my mind as we walked along! If Dad had realized then how I never again wanted to go back to our ugly little old Main Street!

Well, if he had I wouldn't be writing this story now. I would never have been given a chance to make the heart-breaking discovery that Broadway's lights can burn down to cold gray ashes for the girl who does not know that their glitter is but a false-face for fangs.

There is a saying that Forty-Second Street at Broadway is the meeting place of the world. Dad bumped into some people he knew right on that famous corner, just as they were piling into a taxicab. The two ladies and men were all in evening dress—Dad had gone to college with the men. For a few seconds they held an informal reunion on the sidewalk while I stood back, pushed and shoved by the crowd I longed to be a part of. Then I was presented.

Nothing would do but that we go with them to the after-theater dancing club they were bound for. Of course Dad protested because he wasn't dressed—and because I was along.

"Forget your excuses, Henry," one of the men said, taking Dad's arm. "You're all right as you are, and as for Peggy she'll have the time of her life watching things and dancing too," he finished.

SO WE got in the cab with them and started off. What a sensation swept over me! Something like the way one feels starting off to one's first real party—only a hundred times more exciting. The two ladies with us were dressed up like a million dollars. Diamonds sparkled from their throats and fingers. I told myself they were the most beautiful girls I'd ever seen. It gave me a grown-up feeling to be riding along with them to a dancing club.

The place quite took my breath away. It was like the unusual places I had read about in books and magazines; this was the famous "Club Intrigue." The sounds of dance music drifted through the rose dimness of the black velvet draped room. We threaded our way between tables of beautiful women and good-looking men. I was so thrilled by everything I did not dream that most of the faces around me were masks. It seemed that everybody was having a wonderful time. Mr. Lowden, one of Dad's old friends, took out a gleaming silver flask. He poured a golden liquid into all the glasses, except mine, and mixed it with White Rock. My glass was filled with gingerale.

AFTER the next dance, which Mr. Lowden took with me, I saw Dad lean over and whisper to him. Somehow I sensed it was about me. Mr. Lowden gave me a look and nodded to my father. Then he turned to me.

"You're such a wonderful little dancer, Peggy, I'm real sorry your father insists on taking you home. But he doesn't think its good for a pretty little girl with straw-gold curls to stay up in this white midnight of ours," he said.

His words came near bringing hot tears to my eyes. I hated to be treated like a little girl in front of the others; but most of all I hated to be dragged away from all the lights and music and laughter. However, there was nothing else to do but go home with Dad. It made me madder still when I heard him tell the others he



I felt my cheeks flaming as I stood there a target for those taunting girls . . . Then a glance from the kindly brown eyes steadied me.

would return after leaving me at the hotel.

We rode along in silence. I was so angry and disappointed! My whole trip seemed utterly spoiled. As the taxicab dodged through the twisting lines of Broadway traffic and the lights glowed and twinkled at me, I remembered what Mr. Lowden called it all.

"White midnight," he had said.

What a wonderful description, I told myself as I looked yearningly out of the window at the lights streaming by like rows and rows of flashing ribbons.

I wanted to stay in this "white midnight." Something within me demanded to become a part of it; to play in it; to laugh; sing; dance; and enjoy it as those people back in the "Club Intrigue" seemed to be doing. Rebellion flared up in my heart, its flames working fever-like through my blood.

"If I get a chance, I'll go back to this wonderful white midnight the minute Dad leaves me at the hotel," I vowed inwardly.

WHILE I waited near the elevators for him to get our keys from the desk, a very good looking young man passed by. His eyes met mine a moment, as if he would like to speak. In the one glance that I dared give him, I realized that he was way ahead of the small-town boys I'd known back home. If only Dad had not started towards me then, I'm sure I would have given the attractive stranger a smile. Going up in the elevator



I was conscious of a keen regret. He would have been just the one to take me back to Broadway and to the white midnight, I thought.

"I'll be back kind of late, Peggy. You just tumble in and get a good sleep, my dear. You'll need it. We've got a long tiresome ride home before us tomorrow. Good-night," Dad said, and kissed me good-night.

I was standing at my window, the feeling of rebellion still strong in my heart as I watched the lights of the city glowing like myriad fire-flies. The impulse to run out into the night was almost sweeping me away—when the room telephone tinkled. A premonition seized me as I took down the receiver. Intuition or something told me that it was the man who had passed me in the lobby.

It was!

"I'm mighty lonesome," came an appealing masculine voice over the wire. "This is my first time in New York."

I told him I was lonesome too. Then he suggested that I meet him outside of the hotel in a few minutes. My mind worked like lightning. Dad wouldn't be back until two or three. It was only eleven-thirty. Here was the chance I'd been wishing for.

"All right," I told him, "I'll meet you if you'll take me out to Broadway where the bright lights are shining."

"You bet I will," he replied, laughing pleasantly.

OF COURSE I was a little nervous going down to meet a perfectly strange man. It was the first adventure of any kind I'd ever had. But the thrill of it drove away any fears my nervousness tried to arouse. I would not allow myself to think there was any danger out where Life was being lived in a glittering fairyland.

We got along immensely from the first moment. He explained how he had gotten me on the phone. It was simple enough. Standing by the desk when Dad had returned the keys he had read the number of our suite.

Shortly after Father went out, Mr. Bryant—that was his name—called me up from a hotel booth.

He asked me where I wanted to go.

"Someplace where there's music and dancing. Anyplace but the 'Club Intrigue,' I think they call it. Daddy's gone back there to join some friends," I answered.

We got in a taxicab and started for the bright lights. Before we got to Broadway I had told him all about myself, and how I wanted to have a good time and play in the white midnight of New York.

"Nothing ever happens out home. It's dead all the time. I wish I wasn't going away from New York," I said.

The place he took me to was on the same pattern as the "Intrigue." But it was much noisier. The people didn't seem quite as nice. The dancing appeared wilder. A waiter gave us a table, smiling at Mr. Bryant in a very friendly way. Several persons spoke to him after we became seated. For a stranger in New York, he certainly appeared to know a lot of people. He accounted for his friends by saying they were from out of town—Baltimore, he said, his home city.

BEFORE the next dance struck up, Mr. Bryant took a flask from his pocket and began fixing something in two glasses. I watched him, wondering if he expected me to drink. I was certain he did when he handed me one of the glasses. I shook my head at first. All I had ever taken in my life was a little Christmas wine. Of course I know plenty of girls at seventeen drink gallons and gallons of liquor nowadays. But, you must remember that this was four years ago—before flappers and cocktails became such bad friends for each other.

"It'll make you have a much better time," he coaxed. I didn't like the taste of the stuff. But it certainly did give me a wonderful feeling—as if I was floating around and around on golden clouds. I danced with more pep than ever.

Another drink from his flask and I had almost for-

gotten where I was, who I was, and where I was going. The music became faster to my way of thinking. My pulses kept up with it, beating more swiftly with each new note. I drifted into calling him Hal, his first name. The pretty things he told me flattered me. Soon I found myself telling him I loved him after he had drawn me to him in the midst of a dance and kissed me.

Vaguely I remember leaving the room of shaded lights, leaning on his arm, asking laughingly where we were going. Somewhat dizzy from the excitement of things around me, I only half caught his reply. It was something about another place. But I did not care then where we were going. Nothing seemed to matter except that I was drinking from the cup of thrill that Broadway was holding out to little unsophisticated me.

I looked in vain for other people in the quiet, dimly lighted room he led me into. I listened for music that never started up. Slowly my bewildered senses forced my baffled eyes to Hal's face for some kind of explanation. The room was beautiful, with its rich furnishings and mellow orange and blue lamps. But I liked it. I couldn't quite understand what we were doing there.

"A little party. That's all," he said. "Some people coming in soon. Actors and actresses. They'll play and sing. We'll have the gayest time of your life. You'll have something to tell the girls at home about."

SUDDENLY he left the room and came back with something in a glass. I waved it away at first, taking it only when he lifted it up to my lips. It was like cold fire trickling down my throat. For a fleeting second there was a burst of strength in my veins. I felt as if I could conquer the world. Then, before I knew it, a drowsiness came over me. I sank onto a big divan, my head toppling against Hal's shoulder. Dimly I realized that the room was filling with shadows—shadows sprayed only by the soft light from one orange-shaded lamp.

I was moaning for my daddy when I awakened to the tragic realization that I had fainted from having drunk that bitter whisky. My eyes fluttered open weakly. Through the graying shadows of the room I beheld Hal Bryant standing over me, his face white and drawn.

"Good heavens, I thought you were dead," he cried hoarsely.

I would have rather been dead a thousand times than be like this. But I didn't have the strength to speak. I could only lie still, body and soul steeped in miserable agony. The man bent down and shook me so roughly until I cried out in pain.

"You've got to get out of here quick. It's three o'clock—"

His words shocked me into torturous life.

Three o'clock! Oh what will I do? Daddy'll be at the hotel waiting. He'll know the truth the minute he sees me. He'll kill me! Such were the thoughts that shot through my splitting head like strings of barbed wire. Desperately I tried to sit up, only to fall back dizzy and weak.

Once more Hal Bryant tried to rouse me; tried to get me up and out by speaking of my father. He forced more liquid fire down my throat, thinking it would stimulate me. However, it only succeeded in numbing me back into unconsciousness.

THE next day the papers were full of my disappearance.

Police were combing the city for me. It was their belief I had been kidnaped. But my father declared otherwise. He told the newspapers he had seen me safely in my room and that I must have left the hotel of my own accord and been tempted into trouble by the

desire to see something of life in the city. He upbraided himself for having ever brought me, saying I was too susceptible to the city lures.

What Hal Bryant and I read in the papers scared us both. He told me I could not go back to my dad.

"I'll keep you under lock and key if necessary," he threatened. "When this thing blows over and there's no danger to me you can go back to your damn home town."

He needn't have worried about my going back to Father. Although I shuddered at the memory of the night before, the fear of Dad's wrath made me shut my eyes and cower until I trembled from head to foot. He was always without mercy over every childish scrape I had ever gotten into.

I remained in the apartment for nearly two weeks, hiding from the world. Hal Bryant hung around most of the time, but he never gave me anything more to drink or even tried to kiss me. I found out that he had lied to me about being from out of town. As the days slipped by and I listened to some of his telephone conversations, I realized I had run into the kind of man who makes his living gambling and working all kinds of crooked deals. He was always lying to somebody over the phone.

When the newspapers stopped printing stories about my mysterious disappearance, Bryant told me I was free to do what I pleased.

"I don't know where to go, or what to do. I've only got the few clothes I wore here and the things you've bought me. And—I—I haven't got a cent more than two dollars," I said, terror gripping me at the thought of going out penniless upon the streets of New York. No longer did they beckon like gilded lures. Their lights had burned down to cold grey ashes for me.

He turned on me saying that I couldn't hang around his place any longer.

"You've got me into enough hot soup as it is. I'm going to give up this apartment tomorrow," he said going out.

I BROKE down and cried for hours. When he came back I was lying face down on the couch. He shook me roughly.

"Snap into it. I've got a job for you if you hit the casting director right. Doll up and play the blue-eyed baby rôle. That's the only way you can get into a chorus. The director's a friend of mine. He's looking for two girls today," he said.

I fixed up and followed him to a Broadway theater, my mind in a daze. I couldn't get it through my head that I was going after a job on the stage. It seemed like a wild dream. But the casting director made me realize differently. After looking me over completely, he said to report that afternoon at four for rehearsal. I was to get thirty-five dollars a week.

"Get yourself a room and start out for yourself. Here's fifty dollars. It's all I can stake you to."

With these words Hal went out of the apartment, leaving me to get ready as best I could and depart.

For what seemed hours I stood in the middle of the floor looking at the five ten-dollar bills he had stuffed in my hand. It seemed like a lot of money at first. But when I thought of the home the giver had taken from me, I realized with a sob that thousands of dollars would never be able to buy it back. My heart sagged inside of me. I sat down and cried, calling for my daddy for the first time since the night I ran away from the hotel.

In spite of my inexperience I got along all right in the chorus. I was the youngest girl in the show, and if I say so myself, easily the freshest looking. I realized, of

course, that the other girls did not like me very much, because I was always refusing to go out with them on parties. Perhaps you wonder why after all that happened, I didn't plunge into the good times to forget the past. To tell the truth my acquaintance with Hal Bryant had sapped all of the desire for such things out of me. I danced, smiled, and sang behind the footlights. But at all other times I moved under the gloom of a shadow.

But a time came when I found it impossible to refuse the girls about a party. I knew if I did they would get their revenge backstage in some way that might make me lose my job. It was always in their power to double-cross me in some part of our acts. I promised Janice Manners I would go to her apartment after the show.

"You'll have a good time, Peggy, if you'll only open up. Ye gods, you're not solid iceberg, are you? Hand the men out a snappy line. Or just do your blue-eyed

baby doll stuff. Of course none of them believe the blue-eyed baby pose is anything more than a bluff. But they like to be bluffed. Just you wait and see," she said, as we waited in the wings for the finale.

I WAS almost struck dumb by the luxury of Janice's apartment. It was a palace compared to my furnished room. She only made thirty-five per week, just as I did. Why, the place must have cost more than that a week in rent alone!

But later, when the men arrived, I soon realized how she was able to do it. I'd been in New York long enough to know that without asking questions.

I took the glass offered me, sipping at it when anyone looked my way. The other girls put theirs right down and were carrying on in high spirits long before I had even taken a good swallow from mine. Janice noticed

this as the other glasses were being refilled. She came over and insisted I empty my glass. Almost everybody in the room seemed to be gathering around me.

"Come on, Peggy, take off the emergency brake," cried Imogene Smart.

Her words were the signal for an attack by all the girls. I felt my cheeks flaming as I stood there looking into the faces of so many strange men, and the taunting girls. Then, as if by magic, the eyes of one man met mine and held them. They were kindly brown eyes. Somehow I thought they were telling me they were glad I was not so eager to drink. For just one moment I studied the owner of those kindly brown eyes. He was tall and slender with a fine face which did not show the effects of dissipation like the faces of the other men did. Of course he was not a young man. Perhaps fifty, with hair just beginning to gray at the temples.

"Toss it down," commanded Janice. "You're holding up the party."

[Turn to page 96]

"You should not have followed me, Billy," I moaned, unable to think of anything else to say.



I Couldn't Steal Another Woman's Husband

FOR five years I was a manicurist at the Hotel Admiral. I held my job because I was pretty and drew customers, and because I worked well and knew how to deal with the men I had to handle. I very rarely accepted any invitations out, as I did not believe it a good business policy.

I liked the place and did my best to please Luis, the proprietor of the barber shop. He was a sleek, middle-aged Italian. He was always very angry whenever I did, now and then, accept an invitation. He had asked me out himself dozens of times, and I never would go. He was very jealous and watched me so incessantly that often, in spite of myself, he made me nervous.

But I made good money which was needed at home. I was sending my kid sister through college so that she could become a school teacher and make better money and have easier hours than I. I was often sick unto death of the manicuring game—of the men with their sly smiles and nudges and winks. Some were quite detestable, whom I loathed touching; others, most of them in fact, were fairly decent.

It was not long before I came to judge men solely by their hands, without even needing to look up into their faces. The lump pink, over-cared-for fingers of the cloak and suit salesmen; the white fishy hands of chorus men; the yellow horny hands of old age; pale limp clerk's hands. It was very rare that a real "he man's" hand came my way—an out-of-door hand, brown and firm and hard.

AS EVERY working girl will, I often dreamed of the day when *the* man would come. My man, to take me out of the inevitable rut of my life. As I grew older and passed twenty-five, the longing in my heart grew for a home of my own, a husband and children. Especially kiddies. I adored them. Ethel, my oldest sister, had two babies. Just to think of them brought tears of longing and love into my eyes.



"You cannot go out with me,
oh no, I am not good enough.
But with Mister Strand you go!"

Would I ever have children of my own? I would ask myself sadly.

Of course I had chances to marry. I even had one from a real "he man," a rancher from Montana with plenty of money. But he fell asleep once at the theater, and showed gold teeth when he laughed, and used a celluloid tooth pick.

I—I just couldn't. But his was the best offer I had, for he was big and honest and well-to-do. My refusal didn't seem to dishearten him very much. A week after I turned him down he proposed to Mame Taylor at the next manicure table, and Mame took him. He was the kind that didn't want just me; but a wife—any wife.

I still dreamed of an all-consuming love that would sweep me away on wings of flaming adoration. Such a love must come to hallow my marriage or—I had rather wait.

And it came. I knew when I looked down at his hands, fine, strong, tender, well-modelled hands; hard yet kind. He didn't try to squeeze my fingers or pinch my arm. He scarcely spoke at all, but I felt his eyes on me.

All at once I felt myself blushing as I had not done since I was sixteen. He smiled at that, and I dared not look up. When I did, my heart thumped madly as his



*"In All the
World
I Loved
Only One
Man, and
I Could
Not Have
Him."*

eyes seemed to pierce through my very soul. They were deep thoughtful eyes, but sad. And his mouth spoke of a world of love frustrated, denied.

He was very tall, and when he stood up I trembled. I felt so small, so insignificant and unworthy before him. The hair at his temples was touched with gray, yet he was not old. He couldn't have been more than thirty-five, though that look of suffering in his eyes made him seem older.

When he went out I just flopped in my chair, too dazed and strangely happy to say a word. He hadn't said a single thing to me, yet I *knew* I would see him again. He would be sure to come back.

"Know who that was, Mil?" Bessie Hoyle whispered across to me.

I shook my head.

IT'S Racey Strand, the big oil operator. He's certainly the cat's meow. I wished he'd sat at my table, but you skinny baby blondes have all the luck. Did you see the way old Luis was lamping the two of you? Better watch your step, kid. That Dago's pretty crazy about you."

I scarcely listened to Bessie's chatter. My thoughts were with Racey Strand. When she began to talk about him again I was all attention.

"Seems he was a mining man out West. Didn't have a dime. He'd always had a tough time of it. But he staked out an oil claim and he believed in it. Now he's worth all kinds of dough. But his wife! Gee, they say she tries to put all Fifth Avenue on her back all at once. She was some tough dance-hall queen, who just roped him in when she got inside information his oil well was coming through."

HIS wife! So he was married. But even this thought could not still the wild clamor of my heartbeats. Love is not a matter of right or wrong; it is an irresistible force that drives all before it.

Two days later when Racey Strand came into the barber shop, he crossed abruptly to my table.

"I tried not to come. I have no right to; but I could not stay away."

I was so upset, so glad to see him, that I let fall the bowl of water I had in my hand. It crashed on the tiled floor and Luis gave me a horrible glare. I knew now that Racey too had felt that strange power that was drawing us together.

"Come have dinner with me tonight," he said in a low voice. "I want you to—very much."

I whispered that I would and agreed to meet him at six, without first troubling to go home.

For men to tell me of their unhappy marriages was an ordinary occurrence. It is the regulation line of talk with a manicurist. All the disappointed, misunderstood men there seem to be in the world! But Racey

was different. He was different in every way from every other man I had ever met.

He drove abruptly to the point.

"I'm married, dear. She was a good many years older than I. It's been hell, all the way from the beginning. If there had been children, it might have made a difference. I grew to hate her, and she mocked me for the gullibility that had made me marry her.

"She didn't love me; but she likes being Mrs. Racey Strand. Social prestige and all that. Don't you see, don't you feel the awful agony of all those empty years? I shrank from women. One had tricked me too cruelly. I made up my mind I would never let myself go again. All women were alike, rapacious and mercenary. Then I looked into your eyes and it seemed as if for me the whole world changed."

I could not speak, dared not meet his eyes. Every word he said roused a rush of love and pity in my heart. My poor Racey! This woman had cheated him out of everything in life worth while—he, who was so big, so splendid, so utterly fine. A lesser man would have flung off such a woman long ago.

LIFE certainly owed him something. It was not fair that for one mistake he must pay with a lifetime of misery. For one wild moment I longed to give him all he had missed—love and companionship, the tenderness of home and children. But suddenly the thought of my own family cleft my mad visions like a flash of lightning. How could I disgrace and forsake my people? They would never forgive me if I were to allow myself to love Racey. For me to—love a married man would be the sin of sins.

Then and there I resolved never to see Racey again. I must drive away the thought of him from my heart completely.

But the long hot summer months were crawling by, and Racey's wife was away. We continued to see each other—not often, for our meetings were too perilously sweet. Perhaps once a week. A dinner, or a dance on the roof of one of the hotels, or a drive in his car far out into the country. Love filled our hearts, though word of it rarely passed our lips.

IT WAS Luis of the barber shop who brought things to a crisis. One September morning he faced me furiously, his black eyes glittering with rage.

"You cannot go out with me, oh no, I am not good enough; but with Mister Strand you can go. Maybe his wife, she do not know, eh? I tell you, Miss Wain, either such goings on you stop, or I send you off—so You getta me, eh?"

Yes, I got him. Either I must give up seeing Racey, or lose my job.

My kid sister at home was just beginning her Senior year at college. I could not afford to quit at the Admiral, where I was established and had a regular,

well-paying clientele. What was there ahead for Racey and me? Much as he might hate her, he had a wife. She had a claim on Racey so strong that I could not gainsay it. I loved him. I made up my mind that Racey and I must come to a decisive break.

I told him that night under the yellow light of a big autumn moon.

"Racey, everything is over. I cannot see you any more. I love you too much to go on like this. You are married. I could not come to you—except as your wife."

He turned sharply to me, his fine face gaunt and strained.

"My dear little girl, you must do what you think and feel to be right. I will never urge you to go against your conscience. I love you too much to risk the thought of your future regrets. But think it over carefully. It is you I love."



"Now look here," she shouted, "just let me tell you this. I've heard all about you, and I'll never set him free. Never!"

"But the world, the world is cruel," I sobbed then. The scent of leaves, already damp and moulding, of wet rotted woods and ripening apples filled the air—mute testimony of fulfillment already hurrying to decay. Life was like that. It sped by so swiftly. Soon it would be over, and these sweetest years gone. My youth, which belonged to him, God had made for this man.

Yet the thought of my mother, stiff, gray-haired, wrinkled; my father in his neat shabby suit, my kid

sister dependent on me for her future, Ethel and her two babies—they all came between and dragged me back.

I felt his kiss hover on my hair.

He spoke swiftly, his voice racked with pain.

"I am going to arrange to go away, Mildred. Not that I love you less, but I want to take the edge off—my sense of loss. Traveling will help. I'll start for California tomorrow night."

"Tomorrow night!" I was faint at the very thought of it.

"It has to be, dear. There's no other way. If I stay here, things can end only one way, and that way you believe would bring you unhappiness. My very dear one! I shall get two tickets, my girl, in case on thinking things over you should change your mind and come with me."

"I won't change my mind, Racey. Don't get that ticket."

"Yes. Perhaps after all you may come away with me."



I dared not answer him, nor did I trust myself to reply to his good night.

Back in my own home I tossed all night, trying not to awaken my younger sister who slept with me. I was in torture. The heart in my breast seemed a dead cold

thing. He was going off to California to seek forgetfulness—the land of yellow poppies, fruit orchards—I could see us wandering there together hand in hand I was a fool, a mad fool, to send him away!

BUT when morning came, though I was haggard and hollow-eyed, my resolution remained firm. I could not steal another woman's husband. Perhaps she loved him, needed him—she had her rights, after all.

At nine I took my place as usual at my little white table near the window, and under Luis' belligerent look felt myself pale still more.

Later on the barber shop was crowded with women being bobbed and men shaved. All at once a tall heavily-built woman flounced in and in a harsh voice demanded of Luis where Miss Wain was.

I began to tremble. It was lucky that I had just finished doing a customer's nails.

The tall woman came and flung herself into the chair at my table. Her face was hard with a look of dissipation that can make even the handsomest woman a thing of horror.

"So you're the Miss Wain I've heard about. Well, I'm certainly glad to see you."

Her hard insolent eyes surveyed me patronizingly.

"A blonde—really—quite a vivid color, your own of course. Now look here, just let me tell you this, Miss Wain." Her voice now rose to a strident note, so that everyone in the shop turned to stare. "I've heard all about your carryings on with my husband while I was away, and I warn you to cut it out or I'll make it hot for you. I'll take care never to give him grounds to get rid of me." She gave a shrill laugh. "I'll never set him free, never. I'll not divorce him; no, not if he carries on with a dozen women."

FAINT from horror and humiliation, I saw her sweep out of the shop. Then a great wave of rage came over me. I wanted to rush after her, denounce her, beat back her lying words into her wicked painted face.

So this was Racey's wife—the woman for whom I was ready to sacrifice my whole happiness. Why, this woman would only exult in Racey's wretchedness; she would feast like a harpy on his martyrdom.

But she would not get a chance—ever. I would defeat her. How could I ever have been so selfish as to let anything come before the great issue of our love!

I rushed out of the barber shop, caring not at all if everyone stared, and Luis tried to stop me. Soon I would be rid of them all forever and on my way to California with the man I loved.

I hurried to a phone booth to call up Racey's office.

"Mr. Strand is not here," came back the reply.

"Do you know when he is expected back?"

"He is not coming back. He leaves for the coast on the nine-fifteen train tonight. Any message?"

"No. No thank you." I heard the cool voice of his secretary chip off like a bit of ice.

My heart pounded.

RACEY was leaving for California. Where could I get hold of him, tell him I was coming along, that I was going to use that ticket after all?

I tried his suburban house number. The man servant's voice told me Mr. Strand's bags had been packed and sent down to the Grand Central Station. I might try him at his club.

I did try his two clubs, but failed to make a connection.

There was only one thing I could do now. I must be at the Grand Central with my things and catch him as he went aboard the nine-fifteen.

I raced madly down to the lockers to get my hat and coat.

Just as I dashed out of the door, I almost ran into Racey.

My relief at seeing him was so great that I gave an absurd, hysterical cry and half flung myself in his arms.

"Come along with me, dear," he said. Even in all my wild excitement, the grave note in his voice troubled me. I followed him up to a quiet corner on the almost deserted mezzanine.

From below came the faint strains of violin music. Cool green ferns seemed to shelter us and shut out the world. Instinctively my hand slipped into his big strong one.

"Racey, dear, I—I am willing to go away with you I want to go now. I love you so. More than anything else in the world."

He leaned toward me, and I do not think I ever saw his eyes as tender or as sad as they were then.

"Little sweetheart, I—I cannot take you with me," he said softly. "I cannot let you make the sacrifice. My wife has managed to get hold of your name and address. That head barber, Luis, wrote about us to her. If we go away together, she will drag your name into the papers, make a scandal that will drag down others besides ourselves. Innocent people will suffer. In time you would be wounded by the scorn of women, even such women as she is, respectably married women who have the power to cut and torture."

His tone was so bitter that I forgot my own pain in pity for his suffering.

"Dear one," his head was bent low, "my own little girl, I love you better than life. You see how things are—I cannot take you away."

"But you will go!" My fingers clutched tight hold of his arm.

"No, dear, I have changed my mind. I am not going to leave you, so that my wife will be free to vent her wrath on you. She's a cruel woman. I must stay to look after you. I have cancelled the tickets."

A great load was lifted from my heart. In the midst of the wild clamor of my thoughts, suddenly everything seemed right because he was not going away. Once in awhile perhaps I could see him, and know that somewhere in the city he too was waiting, longing, dreaming of our love.

It was past six when he finally drove me home.

I WENT straight to my room, pleading a headache. With my red, tear-swollen eyes, I could not face the family at the dinner table. But their pleasant cheerful voices, the little cries of Ethel's two kiddies, drifted in to me as I lay face downward on the bed, too worn by emotion to have strength for tears.

I must go on working, fighting. Racey said he would try and get me another job. I must make money. My kid sister must have every chance—perhaps someday she would meet the right man and find happiness.

For me now there could be no home, no husband or children. In all the world I loved only the one man, and the one man I could not have. Why was our love given us only to be crushed and denied. Why? Why?

I must have drifted off into sleep, for hours later, it seemed, there came a loud ring on our doorbell.

A man's voice, probably Jack's, in the hall. Then Ethel came flying in to me, her hair almost on end—in excitement.

"Get up, there, doll yourself up. It's your Mr. Strand, He's got his car outside and wants to tell you something important. And here, he brought you these." She flung a great bunch of roses at me.

I gave a cry, sat erect. Racey! What did he want to tell me? Roses! Their sweetness seemed to rob me of all control.

Ethel was brushing my hair, powdering my nose.

"Come on, Mil, pull yourself together. I shoed the family out into the dining room so you have the parlor all to yourselves."

"What can he have to tell me?" I murmured.

"Go find out for yourself," Ethel laughed, and pushed me out into the hall.

I could hardly walk. I found myself clutching the roses hard against my breast without feeling the thorns.

RACEY was arising from his chair as I walked into the parlor. How tall and distinguished and handsome he was! I longed to rush to him, fling myself in his arms, forgetful of everything but the swift bliss of his embrace only.

"Mildred, I have something of great importance to tell you."

His voice was very grave, yet through it I thought I heard ring a deep note of gladness.

"I can now get my freedom. My wife must have thought I started for California. She didn't expect me home tonight. What need to say more? She will no longer oppose a divorce."

He took me in his arms. "I do not want to speak, or even think of her. That is over. There is only you, my sweet. I want to remember nothing but you from now on—forever."

"And ever," I breathed, as my lips met his above the roses.

So we did take the train for California at nine-fifteen on another night. And we did wander through a land of yellow poppies and fruit orchards hand in hand.

And somehow I think it pays to wait even though the mills of the gods grind slowly.

A Tent Awaits You

AT THE end of a winding trail a tent awaits you," the Gypsy said.

There was a wind, and the trees seemed to whisper that it was true.

On another night——?

*Read this strange story
of real life in the*

December SMART SET

Suppose You Were One of These Heroines—

*Would you
fall in
love with
their
heroes?*



CONSTANCE TALMADGE, in her latest film, sets out to show that "Heart Trouble" is a thrilling if not a fatal experience. Ronald Coleman, sharing the excitement with her, confirms the impression made by his entry into the leading-man class not so long ago.





VERA REYNOLDS, to judge by "Feet of Clay," can get in and out of the wildest situations—or apparel—that banquet-hall or bathing-beach can furnish. Through thick and thin—again considering costumes, if you please—Rod La Rocque stands by her.





BETTY COMPSON proves "The Fast Set" as hard to judge from a single viewpoint as Betty herself. And was ever there anyone who could look so "different" in varying circumstances? Elliot Dexter, opposite her, comes as near sharing her chameleon-like traits as a mere man may.





BETTY BLYTHE, if not the heroine of "The Breath of Scandal", certainly re-lives before our eyes the career of a remarkable woman-of-the-world. Lou Tellegen, a husband whose double life almost brings ruin and death, is another figure of this gripping story from real life.



I faced him panting with fury.
"You—you cad!" I cried.

The Girl *Who* Wanted Everything

—*And What She Really Found*

I'VE never had a home—not to remember. At fifteen I ran away from an orphan asylum, at seventeen I was dancing in a chorus, and at twenty I had a good job with the *Rosebud Beauties* company.

And still I wasn't satisfied.

You've got to be pretty in the show business—pretty of face and form.

I answered all the qualifications, so Jack Hurley told me:

"Maisie, there's no reason at all why you and I can't be a knock-out in big time. I'm going to see Max Winch when we get back to Chicago. Then, if you're willing to listen to reason——"

I knew what that meant. Jack had been making love to me for over a year. There wasn't any question of marriage. Jack had a wife somewhere or other; stage-people often mislay their wives that way.

You get used to things in the theatre

It's hard to explain just how I felt about Jack's proposition. I was ambitious, and if I listened to Jack, there was every chance in the world for me to make good. I had never had anyone to tell me what was

right and what was wrong. The theatre was the only life I knew, and its standards were the only standards I had to go by.

But in my heart I had a dream I had never told to any living soul. I wanted a home—a husband. I wanted children, and quiet happiness.

Strange, isn't it, for a girl who had grown up as I had?

Yet at the same time I wanted all the freedom, all the applause, all the money that the stage would bring me. Most people want one thing in life, and stick to it till they get it. But I wanted everything!

JACK mentioned vaguely that his wife was trying to get a divorce. I didn't pay any attention to that—for that's what they all said. Things were up in the air when we left St. Paul. I hadn't said yes to Jack; I told him I'd let him know.

I think there's something in every girl's heart that makes her want to go straight. Sometimes circumstances are too much for her—but it is there. There was that something in my own heart, and I hadn't had

any training at all. Maybe it was worry, maybe it was only because I had a bad cold and kept on working, but at any rate I took sick on the train the night we left Winona.

High fever—throbbing temples—and a queer sharp pain in my chest.

Kitty Bosworth, my best friend in the company, stopped in the aisle and put her hand on my forehead.

"Heavens, Maisie!" she exclaimed. "You're burning up. How about a little whisky?"

I shook my head. I couldn't speak. Then Jack Hurley came rushing up.

"Good Lord!" he said. "I wonder where I can get hold of a doctor!"

THEY were all so good—stage-people always are. But I was too far gone to notice: everything got blurred.

The rest of it—getting off the train, going somewhere in an ambulance—was all like a bad dream. I only knew I couldn't breathe.

How long it lasted I don't know, but I came to myself in a hospital bed, with a sweet-faced nurse bending over me.

"Got to—get to—the theatre." I managed to say, in jerks.

"That's all right, my dear," she told me, soothingly. "You've been pretty sick. It was pneumonia, you know, but you're getting along beautifully now."

"How about the show?" I whispered.

But I knew without being told. The show had gone on without me. It always does.

Later, when I got a little of my strength back, I could take stock of things around me. The first thing I noticed were fresh roses on a table beside my bed. The nurse showed me the card. It read, "From Jack, with love."

A little after that a letter came from him. It told me not to worry.

"Just hurry up and get well, dear," he wrote. "Then we'll go and see Max Winch in Chicago."

Somehow, away from the company, Jack's proposition seemed more impossible now than ever! I groaned aloud. I didn't want to go. I didn't.

During those long days of getting well, I had plenty of time for thinking. Sometimes I'd feel homesick for the theatre again. And at those times I would think it *would* be great to be in a big-time act.

THEN the other dream would come back. I could just see the sort of home I wanted. A little garden in front, and of course a husband. It wouldn't be a home without love.

I could imagine *him* exactly. But one thing I did know, it wouldn't be Jack. He didn't seem to fit into the picture at all.

It was about this time, when I was able to sit up and take nourishment, that I had a queer visitor. He was a tall, shy-looking young man who didn't seem to know what to do with his hands. He came to my hospital bed one day and stood looking at me solemnly.

"Are you Miss Maisie McCullough? My name's Hugh Fraser."

As that didn't mean a thing to me, I just waited. Soon he swallowed hard.

"Kitty Bosworth's my cousin," he said. "She wrote to my mother you were here. Maybe, after you're well enough, you'd like to come out and stay with us at the farm. I'll come in for you with the flivver. It's only ten miles."

"Bless your heart," I cried, "I'd just love to!"

Somehow, when he smiled I saw he wasn't so bashful, after all. And he was rather good-looking, too, with

keen, steady gray eyes in a sun-browned rugged face.

That night I dreamed my dream again. I could see the house and the garden—and this time I could see the husband too. He looked like Hugh Fraser.

"What, that hick?" something in me jeered.



"I know what theatre-folks are like," she said It was the first slap in the face I had ever received on account of my profession.

But I didn't fool myself for a minute. A girl usually knows the right sort of man when she sees him, whether he wears city clothes and keeps his hair slicked or not.

I was awfully anxious to get well enough to go out to the Frasers'.

Finally it was decided that I was strong enough to go. Someone phoned out to the farmhouse, and Hugh came in. He didn't seem at all like a hick this time. His bashfulness was all gone.

"I don't know how well I can walk," I said. "I haven't tried yet."

"Don't let that worry you!" I had got up from my chair and was making my first shaky step. He waited till I had my coat and hat on, then he picked me up and carried me out to the car as if I had been a baby.

Something in his strength and quietness thrilled me. All through that long ride into the country I kept looking at him sidewise. The closer I looked, the better I liked him.

I didn't know what to make of him. I hadn't known any men except "kidders," the sort who are used to women, and will say anything.

Hugh wasn't like that. He didn't talk unless he had something to say.

The day was one of the first mild ones of spring. The wheat-fields were green; I heard a robin singing . . . In my heart was a strange joy.

My welcome, at the comfortable old farmhouse, was all that I could ask for.

THERE followed days of perfect happiness. I grew strong quickly—too quickly! The longer I stayed, the less I wanted to go away. It was all too pleasant.

Hugh didn't say much to me, but I'd find his eyes

We would stop under an old tree and watch the sunset; Hugh puffing his pipe in silence. Only his eyes spoke.

I knew that pretty soon I'd have to be going back—unless something happened.

Hugh hadn't told me yet he loved me. I saw that I'd have to make the first move.

So one evening as we watched the light fade in the west, I started to talk about the theatre. I told him I had always loved it, and that nothing would ever make me leave it, except—

"Except what?" asked Hugh quickly.

"Except a chance to have a home—a real home of my own.

"Maisie!" cried Hugh. He took a long breath.

"That's what I've been wanting to ask you and didn't dare. I love you, I've loved you since the very first minute, and it's been growing on me ever since."

I smiled down into his eyes. "Then why didn't you say so?"

Even a bashful man can take a hint. In an instant Hugh's arms were around me tight.

Oh! the thrill of love, when you've never known it before!

THAT night was like heaven. We came back and sat on his little porch, till long after dark, talking of the future.

I had no regrets.

I put all thought of the theatre out of my mind.

The next day Mrs. Fraser said to me: "Hugh tells me he wants you to marry him."

"Yes, and so do I!" I said, laughing for joy. But she didn't smile.

"You're a good girl—aren't you?" she asked grimly.

I felt the hot blood rush to my cheeks. "I've always tried to be," I answered. "Why do you ask?"

"Because I know what theatre-folks are like."

It was the first slap in the face I had ever received on account of my profession.

I resented it. "He will have to take a chance,"

I said, and turned away.

Afterward I was sorry; I didn't blame her. And—it wasn't Hugh's mother I wanted to marry!

But my thoughts turned longingly to the theatre, where they didn't ask questions, where they took people just as they were.

Hugh, that evening, seemed worried. At last he said:

"Maisie, I want to ask you something. Have you ever had—any affairs?"



fixed on me with an expression that thrilled me. Little by little I grew to know, for the first time, what love really meant. I knew, too, that if Hugh asked me to marry him, I'd say yes. Then at least I'd get some of the things I wanted; a home, love—peace!

But dreams die hard. Sometimes I'd think of the theatre, and of the hard, rough life that I had grown to care for. It wasn't easy to give that up.

Soon I was well enough to be able to take long walks with Hugh in the evenings, after his work was through.

"You're the first man I've ever let kiss me," I replied proudly.

It was true. He said no more. His arms held me tight.

"Thank God!" he said, and his voice trembled. "I couldn't bear the thought of any other man's arms around you. You're mine—all mine!"

Oh, how I loved him! My heart ached for him. My dreams now seemed at last to be coming true. Hugh said he wished we could be married in June.

THERE was a little house that Hugh's mother owned, and we planned to live there. I was glad we weren't to live at the big farmhouse. Somehow I wasn't sure Hugh's mother liked me since that talk we had.

Still there were moments when I thought of Jack, of the career I had sacrificed. After all, the world of the

I took it puzzled. Who could be sending me a telegram?

I opened it, and Hugh watched my face while I read it. It said:

IMPORTANT NEWS CAN YOU MEET ME
LA CROSSE FRIDAY? ARRANGED TRY-
OUT WITH MAX WINCH CHICAGO SATUR-
DAY LOVE JACK

I smiled, as I handed the telegram to Hugh.

"This gentleman's a little too late," I said. "I've got other business to attend to Saturday."

For Saturday was the day set for our wedding.

Hugh read it, frowning. His gray eyes narrowed dangerously.

"Who's Jack?" he asked briefly.

"Jack Hurley. He's a dancer. He wanted me to go to Chicago to see a manager, there was a chance for us to go East together. But what does it matter? That's all over now."

"I'm not so sure about that," said Hugh shortly. "I want to ask you a few questions, and I want honest answers. He wanted you to go East—with him?"

"Yes." I didn't like his tone, and showed it. "What about it?"

"He proposed to take you with him alone? Did he also propose to marry you?"

"Of course not!" I tried to laugh. "He's married."

"You're the only man I could marry—and still keep my dreams!"



theatre was the life I loved, the only life I had ever known until the last few months. At such moments I wondered how I could stand the dull life of the country for as long as I lived.

It's terrible to love two different things and to have to give one of them up. But there wasn't any doubt in my mind as to which one I would choose. I loved Hugh with all my heart. His slightest touch thrilled me through and through.

Sometimes I felt that I could hardly wait for June to come!

WE HAD even begun to fit up the little house. Hugh had bought some new furniture, and the joy of getting everything ready was almost more than I could bear.

One afternoon Hugh had been into town, making some purchases. I was at the gate when he returned. My heart was full of joy, when I held up my lips for his kiss.

"Here's a telegram for you," he said. "They'd have phoned it, but the line was down, so I brought it."

"And was his wife going along?"

"Certainly not. He doesn't even know where she is."

"Hm. Just as I suspected. He wanted you to go with him because he is in love with you. And what did you say to this pretty proposition?"

BEFORE the fury in his tone I shuddered. Was this the man I had loved—the man who had been so kind, so gentle?

"I told him—I didn't know," I said as gently as I could. "Can't you see, Hugh? It was before I knew you! On the stage, things like that aren't considered so bad. But I tell you it's all over! I love you—I've never loved anyone else."

My hands crept up to his shoulders, but he shook me off savagely.

"Do you suppose I'd believe that? It's a lie—like everything else you've told me! You're all alike, you stage-people."

"Hugh!" I cried.

But he turned and walked into the house without another word.

[Turn to page 109]



She put her arm confidently in Cheska's,
and they moved away.

The Honor of India

IT IS hard for a man to say why his loyalty to a friend remains untouched by wounds. Perhaps all you of ancient American lineage do not feel as I. For, although my New England ancestry is as pure and honorable as any, I grew up in India.

I am white. My father was the American Consul at Calcutta when I was four. The plague took both my

parents three years later. Somehow in the confusion of death, I was forgotten. Thereafter the Gaekwar of Bedoul—I must not mention his real province—sheltered me as his son.

My earliest memories—once I shut out those days of horror which I long to forget—are of the road leading to the palace as the Gaekwar's long caravan wound its



way into the hills. I cried a little now and then, but mostly I laughed because I was warmly dressed and well fed for the first time since the awful tragedy which had taken away my home.

My words are stilted because my English was taught by Masters, and I had little contact with my own people until five years ago.

TWO events have had such a marked influence on my life that I cannot help record them. But first I must explain that the Gaekwar's son was just one year older than I. We became inseparable companions and found our way in and out of all our scrapes together.

On my eighth and Cheska's ninth birthday, we had a

party. Several children of the neighboring princes were invited—and one little American girl whose parents were stopping for a few weeks at Bedoul. We planned eagerly, as children will, but we little dreamed that the party was to influence our entire lives.

My memory is not as clear as it might be . . . I was too happy to notice details. It was just a wonderful blur of color, music and laughter. We played hi-joss and Mah Chiang until dark, and then we gathered in the banquet room for dinner.

There my memory again records a great joy. The room was dimly lighted by the flare of candles, leaving the walls hidden in the dancing shadows. Beryl was seated between Cheska and me, in honor of her American

*When we were safe
in the calm water, I
flung open the door
. . . On the instant
my mind cleared.*



prerogative. How the others sat, I do not know, for my eyes held only the impression of round faces, shining silver, white linen—and a wealth of brown curls about the sweetest face that ever graced the earth.

Children attain manhood and womanhood earlier in India than elsewhere. Instinctively I knew that Cheska's eyes saw the same curls and the same smile; and that meant rivalry for Beryl's favor. You may laugh, but with us, it was serious.

To me she showed her favor, perhaps because of the whiteness of my skin. Before the evening passed we had promised each other with childish solemnity to wait until we were old enough to wed and to be true. Cheska was sullen. I was in the seventh Heaven of the Hindoos.

During the following weeks Cheska drew farther and farther away, while I walked on air. Beryl and I exchanged childish scrawls. First Calcutta, then Bordeaux, Liverpool and New York were the postmarks of her loyal little missives.

But the weeks became months and the months years. Cheska once more took me to his heart and we planned together. I might have drifted from my dream girl, had it not been for Cheska. As he grew older, he realized that I had the better right because his race was banned. His memories made the plans which brought us to New York five years ago.

THUS it happened that we landed in America in 1919. Pride of ancestry welled within me at the sight of the Goddess of Liberty, and the hard gray skyline of New York. I felt for one despicable moment a sense of superiority over the companion of my boyhood. But that passed, leaving me with only the glamor of the unknown.

For three months we stopped at a big hotel and were lost in a delirious round of cabarets, theatres and midnight clubs. The whispered word, "Prince," carried Cheska everywhere—and me with him. It was our first taste of the world and we sampled everything.

We were also favorite escorts of the most beautiful débutantes of the season. The exclusive homes of the

Four Hundred opened their doors to us, and we half forgot our mission.

Then one day a letter waited us at the desk. It was signed "Beryl." We were invited to spend the weekend at her Long Island home, and thus it happened that the second of the two great happenings of my life was planned.

Long Island—I shall never forget it. The vision of its tiny hills and sand-dunes are imprinted on my memory forever. Beryl's home was not as grand as the palace of the Gaekwar, but its simplicity bespoke good taste rather than riches. In fact, I recognized in the far-flung acres of the grounds that her people were very wealthy. Strangely enough, that simplicity stirred long, dead memories in me of a home that had been forgotten in the passing years: of my father, and the soft sweetness of my mother's voice as she sang a lullaby. I was lost in a surge of emotion.

So enrapt was I with my surroundings and the ghosts of memory, that I hardly noticed Beryl and Cheska engaged in animated conversation. I had not even risen when she entered the room, and I think she felt hurt.

But when I did finally allow my eyes to rest upon her, what I saw caused me to gasp.

If I were an artist seeking a model for an angel, I should have sought no farther. She was dressed in a light blue dress of some cobwebby material which set off her ivory and rose complexion as green hills do a sunset sky. Her soft brown hair waved just enough to be alluring, and wreathed the beautiful oval of her face in glory. Her eyes were as blue as the skies of India in August, and her lips—nothing among all the Gaekwar's rubies could compare with them.

I was struck dumb, paralyzed. Cheska carried on an amiable conversation with her, while I stood speechless by my chair, rooted to the spot where I had risen. Beryl's color heightened uncomfortably under my continued gaze, but seeing that I made no move to join in the talk, she put her arm confidently in Cheska's and they moved away.

The agonies I suffered during the next four days are beyond words. I suffered at every smile she gave to Cheska; at every word. I was hopelessly, madly, desperately in love, yet was powerless to intervene as she turned more and more to him for entertainment.

How can I blame them for a thing I did nothing to prevent?

Our week-end stretched into an age of tongue-tied suffering, the most intense agony of mind I have ever felt. To see Beryl and Cheska drift away arm in arm after the morning meal, only to return late for luncheon flushed and excited with the pleasure of the morning, was torture. To be sure, the afternoons were given over to social affairs which included us all—but had I not expected a continuation of our childhood romance? She seemed to have no remembrance of that at all.

I became despondent, and took to walking along the shore and listening to the surf. More than once I stumbled across my childhood sweetheart and chum in loverlike communion—and I would tear myself away without stopping to eavesdrop.

ON THE foggy morning of the fifth day of our stay, I stumbled from the house for a walk along the shore. Soon I seemed to hear strange voices in the rumbling threat of the surf. How long I had walked, I do not know—before I heard cries off-shore. It came from a boat, a small yacht, which had been out on the water all night in the fog. It was in trouble.

The waves were high and vicious, and the yacht—a forty-foot cruiser—was drifting shoreward. Her only chance was to clear the breakers and get within the calm water of the cove a hundred yards up the beach.

In a blind agony, I stumbled into the surf, borne on by a power beyond my comprehension. My senses reeled and there was a ringing in my ears. The waves butted me about like a bit of flotsam. I was lost in the grip of a strange power.

How the storm beat upon that shore! Yet I had no time for fear. I was swimming, battling against the sea, as I had learned long ago in India, the white form of the yacht tossing with every wave like a beacon before me.

I beat the sea somehow and found the buoy flung from the deck. When I got aboard, I was weak, half drowned and wholly numb to my surroundings, but I managed to pull her nose around and made the cove with the drift.

When we were safe in the calm water of the inlet, I staggered to the cabin.

ONE cannot describe the torture of a broken heart—much less a shattered idol. What greeted me within the cabin of that yacht nearly crushed my faith in mankind. The boat had been cruising around in the darkness all night, that was plain. Why she had not made port, I could not understand. Though I had seen no sign of a crew, my senses were too dazed to note that this was strange when I first boarded her.

I flung open the cabin door and managed to get inside. There was not a sound, but at the end of the room, seated side by side on a bunk, were Beryl and Cheska.

On the instant my mind cleared. I can even now feel the horror which crept up my spine—Cheska, my chum, and Beryl, my angel.

They both tried to speak, but I would not let them tell me it was an accident. That was unnecessary. I saw the truth with the strange vision that the training of a Hindoo gives. Cheska divined what I thought . . . and laughed!

I wonder sometimes why I did not kill him. The situation was serious enough without this effrontery. His dark skin stood out against Beryl's pallor like a storm cloud on a summer sky. I was

too far gone, I guess, but I heard myself hiss the word "nigger" from between clenched teeth.

At the word, Cheska's face blanched. Strong within him were the impulses of a gentleman, and I had touched his pride.

In that moment we fought our battle mentally. I won my composure first, and despite my exhaustion reached the only possible solution of our problem.

Turning to Beryl, I read in her eyes something that determined my decision.

CHESKA, I said, "we have been friends too long to let a woman blast our friendship. We have been gentlemen too long to let a lady's character suffer."

"No one saw me leave the house this morning, but Beryl will be missed. We cannot hide this disgraceful occurrence, but we can temper it. You shall be the hero—I, the cad, today. You saved us at the risk of your life. Beryl and I were out all night together. Is that plain?"

And Cheska, eldest son of the Gaekwar of Bedoul,

The Proposal

Suppose you were a girl in love—and you saw the years drifting by—and you knew he loved you, wouldn't you propose?

And then suppose he turned you down.

Read "The Proposal" in the December Smart Set.



As the clock struck nine, we slipped away to the village and were married.

choked back a sob as he gripped my hand in a compact which has never been broken.

Beryl was sobbing quietly now. The reaction had set in and she was beginning to realize the gravity of her position. I did not blame her in the least for Cheska's perfidy in allowing her to risk her reputation. Though I despised my chum—I loved him and was proud of his atonement.

AS THE clock struck nine, we slipped away to the village and were married, with Cheska and the minister's wife to bear us witness. It was an anticlimax to all my dreams—and yet a quiet happiness stole over me at the thought of Beryl as my own after all these years.

Cheska arranged the legal end of the ceremony with his native adroitness.

Together we faced Beryl's father and were forgiven. The wedding was not announced, but in the month of October when the leaves began to fall, a beautiful ceremony was held.

A stranger triangle than ours has never existed. Why our friendship has lived, I cannot say. Truly our love has been stronger than hate, and we have given our all for each other. Never has the golden rule been more rigidly adhered to than it has with us.

Because of that honor of India which has been Cheska's, as well as Beryl's and mine, I am proud to sign the name which my adopted father conferred upon me—*Jogenda Chassandra, of Bedoul.*

"You Women of Thirty!"

"Happy the Husband of Today Whose Wife Does Not Cherish

Some Radiant Memory of Those War Years."



SO ENGROSSED has the world become with the flapper and her amatory tendencies, that it has ignored a social element much more significant and influential in present-day life. I beg to invite attention to the flapper's elder sister, the woman of thirty.

To be thirty years old, an American, and a woman, is an adventure; I am almost tempted to say an achievement. For it means that the girl's natural mating time came when the world was at its highest point of excitement, when all emotions and sensations were magnified, glorified, and, in consequence, a little distorted. What the war did for women—not Woman—no man can know, and no woman is quite ready to tell, as yet. We shall have to wait for the full truth until some of these wives of thirty, now deeply involved in the passionate speed and furore of living, sit down in the cooled blood of later years and put their souls on record. I should hate to be a censor in that day! But then, I should hate to be a censor at any time.

One fact we may hold as a certainty; the bride of the war years was more widely experienced, more intellectually emancipated, more *savante* than her mother or grandmother had been or than her children or grandchildren are likely to be. To her befell the great adventure of encountering the sudden and swift and often close companionships of many kinds of men in the fusion of an atmosphere superheated to emotional intensity. And thus she came

By Warner Fabian

Author of "Flaming Youth"

to have a basis of reckoning and comparison that is perilous and unsettling to any but the dullest or the most serenely assured of spirits. Happy the husband of today whose wife does not cherish, secretly or openly, some radiant and disruptive memory of those years. There may be such women of thirty: I have not chanced to know them.

HOW narrow, as compared with that experience, is the career of the 1924 debutante. Our smart, marriageable flapper of well-bred standards—assuming that there is any good breeding left in the social world—meets only one kind of man in one stratum of society, her own. By way of adventure she may make her little splurge into the Greenwich Village of fake artistry, or amateurish writing, or essay a furtive flutter with some footlight favorite or movie moron, but these are only side issues. She will always be within quick summons of that market where the wife-price-quotations are highest in cash and position. If after marriage she seeks distraction outside the domestic circle, it is only to solace herself with the attentions of Tweedledee for the husbandly wearisomeness of Tweedledum. Essentially her life is one-dimensional.

Her older sister of thirty makes more claim on life and love than that. The circumspect Eros, who presides over the socially limited loves of today, might have satisfied the older set equally well if Mars had not butted into the game. But the god of war grabbed the dice box, juggled up a million or more men, and scattered them broadcast to all parts of the map where they fell into new and strange environments, and perhaps, newer and stranger associations. All that remained for Eros was to have women waiting for them. He arranged that, as he always does! In the cities, in the camps, in the hospitals, there were women eager to give aid and comfort to the heroes going forth to war; and those heroes were not only in most cases men whom they had never before known, but who were different in kind from any they had ever known before.

THANKS to those high-pressure years of experience, the wife who should today be on the threshold of settled years is too much the female Ulysses, with an inner Ulyssean hankering for wandering. Knowing the hearts of men, she thereby knows her own heart too well perhaps for her own good. She has been lifted clean out of that single dimension in which her younger sister drinks and dances and does her spreeing, thinking that she is having a devil of a time. He who assumes that all the war-romances are either settled by marriage



or are otherwise things of the past, knows little of womankind. In the hearts of hundreds of thousands of wives, the old, restless flames are unquenched. It is because of this that the woman who was twenty when the war began, and is thirty now, is such a problem to herself and a peril to her neighborhood. In her extreme manifestation, she almost deserves the cynic's stigma, "A flame of sex in a world of tinder."

Within my own limited ken, a score of such instances recall themselves, each an unwritten novel, which must remain unwritten for all of me! For example, this unfinished tragedy:

A girl of ten years ago—gay, attractive, with every surface equipment and accomplishment of her own Long Island set and with a mind which for lack of stimulus had never developed its unsuspected potentialities—married a man of her own lot with the same standards, the same catchwords, the same friends, the same easy acceptance of life as a padded and cushioned automobile in which to ride luxuriously from cradle to grave. An excellent match, but for one difference that under ordinary conditions would have been unimportant. The wife's brains were undiscovered; the husband's were nonexistent.

The Soldier's Farewell followed the Mendelssohn Wedding March within a fortnight, [Turn to page 94]

She had been literally dragged to the dance hall to stand up with El Zorro . . . And then Hackmatack walked in.



The Dream House

ONE does not expect to find a Dream House in the middle of the Arizona desert. But a Dream House is there. I know for I found it—half-way along the blistering Apache Trail from Tucson to Phoenix. There was a time when the Apache Trail was the scene of gun-fights and ambushes, hold-ups and murders. All that is changed now. The railroads offer you the option of making a detour and go over the Trail by auto. I was doing just that in the early spring of this year. When I was about fifty miles out of Phoenix, I found they were repairing the road. I thought I read the arrow correctly, showing the road I was to take, but suddenly I found the road ended abruptly in mesquite and greasewood.

I either had to go back, or take a chance of piloting my trusty flivver over the bumps in the general direction in which I figured the Trail must lie. I resolved to take a chance of hitting the Trail and am glad I did. For after about five miles of dodging giant cactus—and

let me tell you the cactus in the Arizona desert grow from fifty to seventy feet high—I came suddenly bang up to the front door of the Dream House. It was there I learned the story of Maizie Futrelle and Hackmatack Evans.

The story was a strange mixture of the desert and the burlesque circuit, and it was told to me under all the desert sky.

YOU have many strange experiences when you tour along unknown roads. But as I steered the flivver over the bumps and then saw ahead of me a long, low adobe building, with doors and window jambs of turquoise blue, I got a sudden jolt. I had heard of the queer tricks the desert plays one, as you ride over it for many weary miles alone. The same mirages the early pioneers saw can be seen today. The weather man will tell you the reason for it if you ask him—lakes and rivers seem to rise as if by magic out of the sand



e in the Desert

Sometimes the mirage seems to create whole magic cities that vanish into thin air when one approaches them.

This feeling, that I was "seeing things," came over me as I stepped on the gas and the car plowed ahead. But the dream house didn't vanish. Another minute and I put on the brake and stopped just before the door. Then the door opened and a gray-haired woman, dressed as a woman would dress for the afternoon in the East, stood on the threshold.

My mouth opened in amazement, and the way I stared at her was certainly rude. She smiled pleasantly as she said.

"You seem to have lost your way. Won't you come in?"

I was still dazed as I climbed out of the car and moved toward her.

"I thought I had seen a mirage—a dream house," I said awkwardly. "And then when you opened the door

—I—I just gaped. I couldn't help it. I trust you'll pardon me."

"No need to make excuses," she answered, smiling. "Everyone who comes here is amazed. And you are really right. This is a dream house. But I am keeping you out in the hot sun, please come in."

THAT was the way I met the charming hostess of the house which I shall always call the Dream House in the Desert. It is a dream house, every inch of it, as you could see for yourself if you ever went there. And there is a story back of it all—the story of Hackmatack Evans and Maizie Futrelle, the show girl.

But first let me tell you a little more about the Dream House.

It is built of stone and plastered with stucco, in the

adobe style which had been brought to California and the Southwest from the pueblo houses of the Indians. This house sets squarely in the desert, without the slightest break in the growth of mesquite, greasewood, and the half-hundred varieties of cactus, surrounding it. There is not even a walk. The desert creeps up to the very walls.

But then, the moment you step past that turquoise blue door the desert is gone. You enter a long, narrow room panelled in redwood. Navajo rugs cover the polished floor. The furniture is of heavy fumed oak carved by the hand of an artist. It is such furniture as one sees in some of the oldest taverns in Europe. On the table was a flagon filled to the brim with an iced drink, and my hostess poured the golden liquid into two tall glasses. I still wanted to rub my eyes to make sure that I wasn't dreaming. Sometimes even now I wonder if it was really there.

There was another room opening from the first, and beyond that I saw a courtyard with a fountain playing in it. We went out there presently, and I found the court carpeted with grass and rambler roses climbing terraces to the roof. Here was a veritable fairyland—and just beyond the walls there was nothing but the blazing glare of the desert! Only the cold glass which I held in my hand, and the very real gray-haired fairy godmother who stood by my side, reassured me it was all true.

THE twilight falls rapidly in Arizona and my hostess advised me to wait until night before I departed, when the heat of the day was gone. It was only fifteen miles on to Phoenix, and I could make it in an hour easily. So I stayed for dinner, which was served in the courtyard by a girl in Spanish dress. She seemed to have stepped right out of the opera *Carmen*.

After dinner we went up to the roof and watched the afterglow of day, the dropping down of the curtain of night. In the daytime, it must have been blistering on that sun-baked roof; but with the going down of the sun the air was cool and presently I found myself looking up into the glory of all the stars. The spell of the desert gripped me—as it must have gripped my hostess. Why had she been so kind; why had she taken me in? I do not know, but I think it was because of that first wonder she had seen written on my face when she opened the door to me. I think I must have shown all the amazement a child shows over his first book of fairy stories.

As I sat there on the roof, I told her something of the wonder of it all to me. In answer, she told me the story which I am passing on to you. Not in her own words, but in my own way I will try and tell it:

MAIZIE Futrelle was a show girl. Not your Broadway butterfly, but one of a family troupe that did a song and dance act. Maizie did not have much of a figure and her voice was little better than average, but she had been born virtually in the wings of a theatre, so there was nothing else for her to do but become a show girl. She was wise for her years and climbed in the game she had been born into—the ten, twenty, thirty-cent burlesque of three decades ago. It had as a contemporary the bald melodramas of the old school and the Charles E. Blaney plays. These latter have gone now, but the burlesque wheel, despite its ups and downs, still manages to survive the inroads of the movies. And the shows are quite a bit cleaner, let me say, than a lot of the high-priced revues you see on Broadway right now.

In the old days there was a pretty straight bunch on the burlesque circuit. Maizie was one of the straightest,

a staunch little heart-of-gold trouper with a white streak a mile wide. And just as it often happens the truest seem to bear the brunt while the slipshod have it easy, tuberculosis came along and picked Maizie.

It was the open places for her then—or the graveyard. Ed Daley, who ran the "Boston Society Girls," as Maizie's show was called, was in love with her and offered to stake her. But Maizie wouldn't listen to him. Then the show planned a series of benefit performances for her. Word of it came to Maizie's ears. She knew the hardships many of the company faced, and when Saturday night came she was gone. All her young life had been given to making other people laugh, and now that she could do that no longer she was not going to be a burden.

There were no sanitariums in Arizona in those days, but Maizie had heard of people who had gone down there and been cured, so she bought a ticket and slipped away into the night. She arrived in Phoenix almost ready to drop. She didn't drop though—the Maizie Futrelles never do—and after a few days in the dry air she was better. Her strength came back to her slowly and the small store of money she had saved vanished. She was fully recovered from the rigors of the long trip but was far from being her old self. Yet she had to eat and, to Maizie, to eat meant to work. She was set on earning her way.

DOWN near the Mexican line, a new town had sprung up overnight. It is no longer on the map now, but in those days it was the center of a newly-discovered mining region and was flourishing with half a dozen saloons, each with its own dance hall. Maizie heard of it and the old song and dance spirit urged her on. There she could earn her own living and there she would still be under the healing desert sun.

She took the stage for the border and ten days later she was the dashing soubrette of El Zurro's dance hall. El Zurro, I happened to know, was Mexican for fox, and from what my gray-haired hostess said on the roof that night, he must have fully lived up to his name.

You can imagine as well as I what those first weeks must have been to Maizie. Clicking her heels in the fast jig-time steps, when her tired legs ached to the very bone; laughing and joking with the rough and ready habitués, when she felt like crawling off to her pine-boarded room and having a good cry. Maizie didn't drink. The first miner she refused to drink with was nasty about it, but then El Zurro stepped in. He had his eye on Maizie and became at once both guardian and protector.

He had reasons of his own for the protection he gave Maizie, trust him for that. Down across the border he had a hacienda, purchased from his clean-up on the dance floor and roulette wheels. El Zurro had dreamed a dream. Until this God-forsaken town came into being he had been little short of a brigand. Now he had become a landowner and his eye was already focused on the life a landowner of his means should follow.

The clear white skin, heightened to coral, which was Maizie Futrelle's outstanding charm, was to El Zurro's mind the one thing he needed most for his future establishment. He watched her as covertly as a cat watches a mouse. He saw disappear the false color of the disease she was fighting and the real blush of health come to take its place. He admired her spirit. Dressed as he would dress her, she would add much to the glamor of his days to come.

All this Maizie knew, with that inherent intuition of a woman who will die defending her honor. She had to get away. She was sick of the dance hall life, sick body and soul. She had kept clear of its dregs, but she

*Here was a veritable fairyland
—and just beyond the walls
there was nothing but the
blazing glare of the desert!*



knew it only a matter of time before its fetid environment would enmesh her.

That was terrible enough, but the gleam in El Zurro's eyes was worse!

So long as he played a waiting game, Maizie went about her work with a smile and a short dagger buried just below the bosom of her dress. It would take money to get away from El Zurro. Law and order was a fact in name only, and she knew that she couldn't merely announce her departure and be allowed to go. El Zurro's men watched every move she made, escape, unless well planned, would end in disaster.

So Maizie worked and prayed by turn and hoarded precious dollars to be used as bribes when the time came for her to make her bid for the world outside again. She was almost in sight of her goal when some inkling of it must have come to El Zurro. No longer was he the respectful protector keeping his distance.

One night he went home with her, to the tumbledown structure that was called the El Centro Hotel. That night it was only on the plea of being completely fagged and using all the arts she knew, that she was able to get rid of him at the door.

I T HAPPENED that the next day Hackmatack Evans came to El Zurro's on one of his periodical visits. Hackmatack was a quiet sort who never bothered anybody, and whenever there was any sort of rough-house he could be depended upon to be as far from it as possible. He had a lone claim somewhere in the mountains, away to the east where no other claims were being worked; the amount of gold dust he brought with him was always small, so his expenditures were small. He was tolerated and usually forgotten. Around El Zurro's they looked on him as being "queer."

On this day of his coming, news of a new strike was being spread around on the wings of rumor, and things at El Zurro's took on a regular holiday spirit. Hackmatack vanished at the first sign of a celebration.

Maizie, who had seen a real earnestness in the way Hackmatack had been watching her, wanted to run after him. Of all the men who came to El Zurro's, he seemed the only one she had ever seen whom she could depend on. Now he was gone. Another minute, El Zurro, whose ferret eyes had seen that parting appealing look of hers as Hackmatack went out, was grinning over her shoulder. She shrank away in disgust. He followed her into the dressing room.

"Senorita does not well show her thanks," he sneered with an ingratiating bow.

"Please go away." Maizie backed against the farthest wall.

El Zurro grinned again and moved closer.

Maizie was desperate then and in a flash her hand sought her bosom. When she drew it back [Turn to page 110]



"Such a leetle knife. The coyote's bite is deeper." . . . Again that tantalizing gesture with his hand.

Slowly but surely I began to give ear to the feminine flattery I met on every turn.



The Matinee Idol

Part Two of the "Memories of a Great Lover"

LONG before the train bearing me from my hometown arrived in New York, Mrs. Hallin, my acquaintance of the Pullman car, asked me why I was going to the city. I told her I was going to look for a job. The interest this second-rate road actress took in my welfare flattered me, and when she offered me a small part in her company I accepted with alacrity. But

more than anything else I welcomed this opportunity to be near the little actress—so aloof, so cool and distant—to whom I was introduced in the dining car.

Of course I was grateful to Mrs. Hallin. I must confess that the stage appealed to me tremendously. I don't know why, but there has always been for me a distinctly feminine appeal about it; women seemed to

me to be closely bound up with the profession. Alas, I have since realized the truth of that all too well.

There is no need to tell of my first impressions of New York. Like everyone who enters it for the first time, my breath was swept away the moment I stepped into the huge station. I can see even now, the look of understanding and sympathy with which the girl of the train discerned the frightened boy who was trying so hard to keep the others from guessing his confusion and timidity. I really think that was the first time she



The star's eyes widened at the interest this spoiled child of fortune showed in me . . . After that, she treated me with more respect.

began to thaw towards me. In the crush of searching for baggage, when we two stood alone for a moment, she asked me kindly where I was going to stop. I confessed that I didn't know how to begin to look for a place. When she said she would take me to her boarding-house, I could have thrown myself at her feet in gratitude.

I WONDER if she still thinks of those evenings we spent together in that funny, smelly house, and how the landlady, after I had talked to her, kept everybody out of the stiff parlor so that we two could have it to ourselves? This sweet-faced girl would watch me with eyes melting into tears, as I talked and talked—knowing that the ordeal of trying to learn overnight to be an actor was testing every bit of my courage. It was her deep understanding that helped me pass through that difficult time with success.

Does she remember the night we tried out the play in New Jersey? How, as I passed her on my way to make my first appearance on the stage, she whispered, "Good luck," and smiled encouragingly? And when I came off, she was standing with the others waiting to congratulate me, because I had played the part, small as it was, well enough to get a hand on my exit.

HOW long did we journey around the country with that play? It was wonderful to me; the long jumps; the little hotels; carrying my dear girl's bag for her; the queer towns and the audiences who now seemed such foreigners to me. I was a man from the city already. Far behind me in memory lay the straggly Main Street of my home town. I never thought now of the days I spent among my once beloved horses. I was an actor, a New York actor, who looked down with great condescension on the small towns; I received the flattery of the small-town women with something like contempt.

They would wait for me outside the theatre door. At the matinée performances, I had to endure all the gibes and laughter of the company because they always would appear, sitting on the first rows, leaning forward with parted lips, hanging on every word I said. At the times when I took the leading woman in my arms, she was forced to turn her face away so that the audience couldn't see her amused smile as we heard the audible gasps coming from the foolish girls out front.

This much I learned from all this adulation: That when it comes to a matinée idol, the small-town, unsophisticated girl and the worldly, spoiled belle of Fifth Avenue are sisters under the skin. The little, blue-eyed romantic child of nineteen who followed me from one town to another—much to the delight of the company—and the rich Philadelphia débutante, who afterwards came to New York to put up at a hotel near mine, were moved by the same impulse. Each one was in the force of an emotion which controlled them absolutely, making them disregard all possible consequences. They couldn't help it; and when the one girl of my heart took the country kid back to her home, and averted a tragedy with her family, I knew that I would never encounter such sincere and innate goodness in a human being again.

ONE afternoon, as we came out of the theatre together and the usual crowd of girls were waiting, one of them remarked aloud:

"I guess that's his wife."

The remark, innocent enough, put the idea in my head. I wanted to have her for my own. I wanted the peace and security of her presence in the world. I have made love to many women since then, but she awakened something in me that no other woman ever did. I had

faith in her, the faith one gives to one's God. I have never had anything bordering on that feeling for anyone else.

And so we were married. She didn't realize it then, but I swept her into it. I exerted every bit of power I possessed to make her my wife. As she raised one obstacle after another, I beat them down by sheer pressure. I never permitted her to forget me for even an instant. I was always with her, and when away, I made her think of me by messages, small gifts, calls on the phone, letters—passionate, beautiful letters which no woman on earth could resist. At last I conquered, by making her feel that unless she married me I would be a lost man.

The first few months of our married life are too sacred to write of. Were she to read these lines, the tears would stream down her face, I know. No two human beings on earth ever came as close together as we did. It was beautiful and as wonderful as a dream of some enchanted spot far from earthly realization. She brought out the very best that was in me. And as I think of her sweetness, her adoring worship of my unworthy self, the pen trembles in my hand, and bitter, bitter tears of despair blot this page . . . I cannot go on. My faults are too heinous; no woman could ever forgive—and women are the forgivers of life. Oh, that I might do something, some little act to offset all that I have done to hurt her! As I sit here in the company of my wretched fellow-lodgers—"Dope," says one as he spits his disgust on the floor—I realize how futile anything I could do would be.

BUT I must get on with my task. Slowly but surely I began to give ear to the feminine flattery I was receiving on every turn. It was only five months after our marriage, that I came to my wife one afternoon with averted gaze, and told her I would have to remain downtown after the show. She looked at me with surprise, but there was no suspicion in her glance.

"I don't mind, darling," she said. "Ever since you made me give up the stage, I have been so happy that I am almost afraid something will happen. It's too wonderful to be as happy as I am. I love my little apartment; the days are too short in which to accomplish all that I want to do. I will wait up for you. Be sure to keep warm, won't you, dear. Your throat is still bad."

I was ashamed as I left the house. But when I entered my dressing room, in the darkness two soft arms flung themselves about my neck—and I forgot all else.

"Oh, Richard," a voice whispered, "I've been waiting for you for hours. I love you, I worship you, Richard. I know I shall forget my lines, dearest; kiss me. Again."

All this was whispered without a word from me. I only held her closely, and the perfume she wore, some strange Oriental essence, made me faint.

SHE was a gorgeous creature of long, graceful lines. Her eyes were green, and she had the glorious Titian hair which rarely appears on the right person. I think she was the handsomest woman I have ever seen on the stage. She was older than I, and she knew how to interest me.

She was quite shameless in her pursuit. Even the audience out-front that night gasped as she threw herself into my arms in the final scene. For even to them it was plainly evident that the leading woman meant every gesture, every word.

My wife was fast asleep when I came home that morning. Her arm was flung across my pillow, and there were traces of tears on her face. I knew that she had cried herself to sleep after the lonely hours of waiting. It was the first time I had ever left her so long, and per-

haps for that reason I knelt down by the side of her bed and groaned aloud.

That very next night, I tried to salve my conscience by taking my wife to a popular Broadway cabaret. I tried by every attention to show her my devotion, and shatter the suspicion that still held her. But even as we danced, I was tempted to flirt with other women on the floor. Every woman almost who passed looked at me with a smile. Their escorts, of course, were entirely unconscious of what they were doing—as was my wife. She once told me that it made her proud to enter a restaurant with me, because she felt that every woman





She was so pert, so cute, and above all so gallant . . . like a charming boy.

in the place would have liked to be in her shoes. Of course this was nonsense, but a majority of them would have been surprisingly easy to meet.

Perhaps we both received a sort of warning of what was soon to come. My wife became suddenly quiet and sat with downcast gaze, listening to me boast of the extraordinary offer my manager had made that day. I was to be featured with the most famous woman star in the country in a new play. We would open in Philadelphia, and then if the play were a sure success, we

would come to New York for an indefinite run there.

As I talked, a blonde young girl, sitting diagonally across from us, smiled straight into my eyes. Almost mechanically I smiled in return. She made such a funny grimace of disgust at her short, stout escort, that I almost laughed outright.

She was so fresh-looking, her features so perfect, and the blue of her eyes deepened into violet as her gaze warmed towards me. She raised a lovely white arm to drink a silent toast to me with champagne. I turned to see if my wife had noticed, but she was still quietly twisting the stem of her glass and watching it with absorbed interest.

I responded to the toast, and the girl nodded for me to meet her in the lobby. I shook my head kindly, with regret. As we left she shot me a look of intense hatred. I knew the type—shallow, pretty, brainless and exceedingly boresome. The many diamond and ruby bracelets on her arms, the pearls about her throat, the rings on her fingers, and the costly fur of her wrap were so patently farewell gifts from cast-off lovers.

A few weeks later, I left for Philadelphia, and to my great surprise my wife refused to accompany me. I know now why she had suddenly grown so grave. I paid no attention then, but as I recall the increasing number of evenings I remained away, the numerous telephone calls in feminine voices asking for me, the letters, the mysterious gifts—handkerchiefs embroidered in real lace initials, cuff links of expensive appearance, pins—no wonder the laughter seemed to gradually die out of her soul.

I was too excited about the opening of the play and the importance of my part to attach much weight to the note my wife sent me, saying she had closed the apartment and had gone to visit a friend on Long Island. Rehearsals went badly. The star was the most glacial woman I had ever met. She refused to unbend and snubbed my best efforts to win her interest. After so many easy victories, I could not understand her coldness towards me.

Everyone in the company suffered from her treatment. She never addressed a remark to anyone in the cast except the manager and the play-

wright, whom it was plainly seen was her slave. She made things so uncomfortable for us all that we were utterly worn-out when the play opened. And yet the sheer force of her personality, the seduction of her rich, beautiful voice, swept the first-night audience into wild enthusiasm. There wasn't a trace of meanness on her face. The people out there thought her glorious. We all hated her, and I think it was this very hatred which made me determine to conquer this woman some day—put her in the position of slave she [Turn to page 95]

*What Would You
Do if You Were
Penniless and
Alone—in Paris?*



Even to my inexperienced
eye the sable coat was a
a perfectly marvelous
creation.

The COST *of a* COAT

WHEN I was just eighteen, the death of my mother was the first real shock that fate had brought me yet. I knew I had been living in the midst of tragedy all my life—for years Father had occupied his side of the house and Mother hers—but that meant nothing to me. It was the breaking up of home, at my mother's death, that constituted the real calamity in my life.

Father was a poorly-paid, always dissatisfied doctor in the small town of Salton. He was capable of better things, I think, but too weak to advance himself. Mother was patient and enduring enough, but none too helpful. Either of them, married to the right person, might have achieved happiness. At any rate, poverty and disillusionment had crushed out any love there had been between them.

They were too poor even to separate. Father had to have the good opinion of the townspeople to keep his small practice. And so outwardly they maintained appearances of living happily together, to the utter misery

of both. Such a life was bound to react injuriously on me.

FATHER, starving for sympathy in his own home, fell in love with one of his patients. She was the wife of the town's hardware dealer, a dissatisfied, rather flirtatious woman, who made frequent visits to Father's office for treatment of fancied ailments. I daresay she did not at first mean to make the affair anything but a mild indiscretion. But my father was completely carried away.

I can never forget the night they came for Father. It was shortly after the early fall of a drizzling November evening. I had just carried Father's supper tray to his study—the very sight of Mother now irritated him beyond control—and was just coming back down the carpeted stairs to have supper with Mother in the cozy kitchen, when suddenly our old-fashioned doorbell clanged sharply three or four times. Instinctively I was frightened, but braced myself to open the door.

Mother came running in from the kitchen; she, too, was frightened, but far more so than I.

Mr. Radnor, husband of the woman my father loved, stood there, his face like a thundercloud.

"I want to see your father, Helen."

MOTHER must have guessed what they had come for. She threw herself in front of me, and with a mad abandon I had never seen in her, caught him by the shining sleeve of his wet rubber coat, and cried:

"No, no, he's not in. Mr. Radnor. He's not in. He's gone away."

Mr. Radnor then took pity on her, for his voice was far gentler when he said:

"Excuse me, Mrs. Hamilton, but I know he is in. We are all very sorry for you, but that won't help him. I have twenty men out here in the yard who want to see him, and who will see him if we have to batter down the door. It will be better for you in the long run to bring him out; otherwise we shall go after him."

I can see now those score of men, all hideous with masks and wet coats, swarming into the house—and my mother trying with loud cries and mad feeble rushes to beat them back. I think I must have fainted after that. I never saw Father again. Mrs. Radnor disappeared, too. Mother refused to talk of either of them. It may be that they are living together happily at this moment; I don't know.

Mother died within a month after that. I really believe she went mad.

AS I look back on it, I am sure she must have been crazy with mental torment. On her death-bed, she begged me in that wildness of voice that had been constantly growing upon her:

"Use men — and mock them as you use them. The love of man is a curse to high heaven!"

With this terrible advice—and she probably didn't know what she was saying—she sent me out into the world.

Mr. Radnor took upon himself all responsibility toward me. He settled up the tiny property which Mother left, and handed it over to me intact, not even taking a fee. Then he gave me a position in his own disrupted household, to look after his four motherless children. In Salton he had a most worthy reputation, and his generosity toward me added to the public esteem.

Yet I left him. It was not my work that made me leave—in fact, I prefer not to tell my reason for going. It was simply the climax of the hideousness of those past two months that marked the first epoch of my life.

Suffice it to say that one dark night I ran away forever, wearing scarcely enough clothes to keep me warm against the January cold, and carrying in my pocket no more than the hundred odd dollars left of my mother's estate.

Six years later to the very day, I was trying on a



"What does this mean?"
I heard my husband say,
and his face turned suddenly white as death.
"You've got the wrong man."

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hundred thousand franc
sable coat in Paris.

But how to bridge, in
short compass, those six
years.

Most of the interval was
spent in New York. I went
there straight from Salton.

What money I had lasted until my
first position—a nurse's aid in a large pri-
vate sanitarium. After that, I took the full
training course for nurses; and I made the great
blunder of my lonely life by not following that
career. I left it to accept a flattering offer to enter a
less well-known branch of the profession.

FATE had thrown me several times across the path
of Doctor Blount, one of the better known special-
ists in his line in New York. It was on my third case
with him that I first noticed his interest in me. At that
time, I thought it merely professional, that he admired
my work. That may have been the source of his first
interest. At any rate, when he made me an extremely

liberal offer to
act as his assist-
ant in his outer
office, I was
overjoyed and
flattered. I ac-
cepted without
a second
thought.

He was a
large, bluff-
spoken, impos-
ing man. In his
office, I was put
in contact with
exactly the sort
of people I
wanted to be
thrown with—
well-bred and
well-educated
people of posi-
tion and
achievement.
They gave me,
somehow, a feel-
ing of respect
for myself that
was very satis-
fying. For the
first time since
I had run away
from Salton, I
began to find
life really worth
living—and felt
that I really
amounted to
something.

THE doc-
tor's office
was in his
house, and I
was permitted
to have a room

there. His wife was a delightful and charming woman.
At first I envied her for her social position, her luxury,
and her apparent happiness. But as I knew her
longer, I could see beneath the surface of her eyes that
her happiness was for the most part a mute show for
the world's benefit. Before I had been there a month,
I began to suspect from certain happenings in the office
things I could shut neither eyes nor ears to—why
dumb misery underlay that sparkling outward happi-
ness. She, however, has no part in my story.

Doctor Blount had one son, to whom both parents
were devoted. Raymond was just under twenty-one
then (I was twenty-five), a lovable young fellow, tall
and handsome. He worked as a clerk in a bank in the
neighborhood of the doctor's house; his father had de-
cided that Raymond did not need a college course to
be the financier both parents wanted him to be.

Raymond fell in love with me the second time he saw
me. A woman always knows that without being con-
ceited about it. From the first I was attracted to him.
For a time, we simply let the affair grow between us—
quietly, if not secretly, for we both knew instinctively
that if the doctor and his mother discovered it, they
would lose no time in expressing their disapproval.

But that sort of thing cannot drift long on an even
keel. Mrs. Blount, I fancied, from her queer way of

looking at us when she saw us together, was beginning to suspect. Since there was obviously no possibility of marriage, I began to shut Raymond out of my life, much as I cared for him. My coolness hurt him, I could see that. But what else could I do? I needed my position. Raymond could give me nothing; I knew that I would not hold my position long if the Blounts knew Raymond was in love with me.

Then came that terrible scene in the Doctor's office.

It happened, I remember so well, the day after New Year's. I had noticed, without thinking much of it, that for a week or so Doctor Blount was being a shade too courteous in his dealings with me.

On this particular day, he had left the office promptly at the closing hour, and had gone downtown with his wife. I had remained in the office, as was my duty, putting things to rights for the next day. Finally I heard Raymond come in from the bank and, feeling rather lonely and more than a little sorry for him, I invited him into the office—mostly to tell him why I had been acting so strangely toward him of late.

Raymond, of course, took boyish advantage of finding me there alone—and I must confess that I was glad. We were actually in one another's arms in the inner office, when we heard a key turn in the lock of the outer office. We sprang apart, instantly.

"Your father!" I gasped.

Raymond was even more frightened than I.

"He mustn't see us alone together like this. He'll be sure to guess."

IN THE twinkling of an eye, my desperate glance fell on the door of a passage-way that connected with the back of the house. Whether the door beyond that was unlocked so that Raymond could go out that way, I didn't know. For the present it was mainly necessary to get him out of sight. I pushed him into the closet.

"If the doctor doesn't leave soon," I whispered, "I'll come around and let you out from the other side."

I had scarcely shut the door behind him when his father came in. He stood in the doorway quietly for a moment, looking at me. Then there came into his glance a look that filled me with fear. When he spoke, his words were like unexpected thunder in my ears:

"You lovely, lovely thing!" he said tensely. "You're driving me almost insane."

My thoughts instantly leaped to Raymond. Had he gone out to the back of the house, or couldn't he get through that other door? What if he heard this?

I merely stared at Doctor Blount stupidly. I couldn't for the life of me have spoken.

Then he came toward me:

"Don't you know you are driving me crazy? Haven't you guessed it, you cold, aloof, tormenting girl?"

"Doctor Blount," I cried, scarcely knowing what I said. "Don't. Don't."

"But there's no one in the house but us. I've come back purposely—I knew you'd be here, you lovely—"

"Don't touch me. Keep away from me, or I'll cry out."

"Cry out. There's no one to hear. But I'm not going to hurt you. I only—"

HOW Raymond must be suffering if he could hear. At any cost I must get the doctor away from the room. A plan came to me. My cheeks burning with shame, I came close to the Doctor and whispered:

"Go now to the library and I'll meet you there in a very few minutes." It was, of course, only a subterfuge for getting him out of the way. I would leave the house at once, without stopping to collect one of my little possessions.

"No, no, don't touch me," I whispered tensely, as he made to take me in his arms.

But he was too quick and strong. In an instant he had seized me, and quite unconsciously, I cried out with fear. Like an echo to my cry, the door behind us opened, and Raymond burst into the room.

"You cad!" he called to his father.

"What does this mean?" shouted the doctor, releasing me instantly. "What are you doing there—spying? No, I know why you're there. . . . This was only a bit of play-acting on my part to make you show yourself."

That was a lie, and I knew it.

"I am here," Raymond cried, "because I love her. And you—my own father—"

"You—love—her?" the doctor said slowly, in stupefied amazement.

"Yes."

There was silence after that. I was more dead than alive, I think. Presently the doctor turned his back, and walked toward the door. There he stopped for a moment, and spoke to me over his shoulder:

LEAVE the house immediately, Miss Hamilton. I will send you a check for a month's salary and have a servant bring your things. If you aren't gone in five minutes, I shall call the police."

I left within his space of five minutes: not because his threat of the police had bluffed me, but because there was nothing else for me to do. I took a cheap lodging, and tried in vain to get another position. Without Doctor Blount's references, I could get nothing.

But Raymond could not put me out of his life. We met secretly at least twice a day: and these meetings only increased his love for me and mine for him. By mutual consent, we avoided all mention of his home life. I could guess that after I had gone not much was said about me, so that Mrs. Blount might continue to remain in blissful ignorance of affairs.

Soon my straits became desperate. The salary that the Doctor sent me was soon gone, and no position was in sight.

Suddenly Raymond confided to me something he had never spoken of before—that on his twenty-first birthday he would come into an inheritance left him by his grandmother. He begged me to marry him when he had it. I told him that marriage between us was impossible—that his parents would make life miserable for us both. He laughed and said he would have enough money to keep us forever without his parents' help, and begged me to let him take me abroad for our honeymoon. Finally I relented.

WHEN two months later he received his money—or so he told me—we were married one Friday night in New Jersey, and the next morning we took ship for France. Under an assumed name, Raymond engaged one of the best staterooms on the steamer—because, he explained, he didn't want his father tracing us and making trouble for me. I accepted this explanation, for Doctor Blount could make real trouble when he wanted to.

Starved as I had been all my twenty-five years for a little luxury, the steamer trip was a peep into paradise. Raymond had given me three hundred dollars for clothes; and with my natural tastes educated by five years of window shopping, I had made the most of the money. Few women on the ship, I am sure, looked as attractive or as supremely happy as I. If I had needed any proof of it beyond my own assurance, I had only to notice, out of the corner of my eye, how people looked after us as we passed.

"It's my coat! It was stolen from me. Tell me where you got it, or I shall call a gendarme."



One man in particular made a nuisance of himself—Stanley Thorne, who was to play a large part in my life later on. Raymond stayed in our staterooms the first two days, and as I was sitting alone on deck one afternoon, Thorne spoke. He was very civil and engaging; there is, of course, a freedom on ship-board which takes little account of formalities.

For the present, not much need be said about him. I had experience enough of life to realize that he was a man of considerable social standing, and must admit that I was a little flattered by his attentions. He was about forty, I judged, admirably dressed, with endless changes of wardrobe, exactly what I had pictured in my imagination as the typical man-about-town, only rather more well-bred than I had imagined the type to be.

BUT later in the trip he became so tormenting and made such a nuisance of himself, that I was really glad when at last we arrived at Cherbourg. As a farewell, he forced his card on me, urging me to come and see him in Paris, giving me the address of an apartment he maintained there permanently. At this last instance of his audacity, I was almost ready to permit Raymond to do what he had long wanted to do—punch the man on the jaw and finish him once for all.

But I forgot Thorne as soon as we were on the train for Paris. Paris—even though we arrived there in the damp cold twilight of a winter afternoon—Paris, I thought, would make one forget all the drab or poignant sorrows and miseries of a lifetime!

The delight of that first day in Paris comes back

to me now. The fog of the night before had disappeared when we awoke in our suite at the Meurice, and the bright winter's sun gilded the city with a glow of golden fantasy; the storied avenues, the quaint crooked little streets interlacing, the beautiful church spires and the majestic public buildings, even the bare trees and the pedestrians, all seemed touched by the magic wand of that clear glorious sun. I truly believe that that morning, when I looked from our window out upon the roofs of Paris, was the happiest moment of all my life. Heaven knows it was to last such a little while!

THE shops—I was crazy about them at first. With a reckless, boyish gayety, Raymond told me to go the limit, one day at least. But I had had too many money worries not to have learned the lesson of frugality. Moreover, I had no idea of how much money he had. Always when I approached the subject, Raymond made some light evasive answer that forestalled further inquiry.

So, for one long happy morning, we paraded the Rivoli, and the Avenue de l'Opera, and the little shops on the arcades by the Elysée Palace, and had as much amusement as if we had spent thousands of dollars.

Now the sable coat was merely an example of the sort of window shopping we did.

As we were passing one of the leading furriers of Paris, I suggested that we go in for the fun of the thing, and ask to see one of their most expensive garments. We must have looked the part we were trying to play—that of an immensely wealthy young couple on a shopping tour; for the

[Turn to page 86]

Billy Sunday

Says:

*“The
Three
Greatest
Words
Are
Purity,
Mother
Love,
Love of
GOD.”*

“Blessed are the
pure in heart, for
they shall see God.”

Woman's Three Greatest Qualities

By W. A. SUNDAY

A GOOD woman is the noblest creature on earth. That will not be contradicted by any man well born, for every such man points to his mother as that "good woman."

First the earth was brought out of darkness and chaos. Land was divided from the oceans. The animals were made. Then man was created in God's image, and last came woman.

I have been asked to answer this: "What are the three most admirable qualities in woman?"

Without hesitation I reply that they are:

PURITY
MOTHER LOVE
LOVE OF GOD

The PURITY and goodness of women, are the light, and the spiritual fire with which the human race with each succeeding generation renews its forces and starts anew.

The MOTHER LOVE in woman, is the power that impresses upon childhood all goodness and nobility that develops in the lives of men.

LOVE OF GOD, deep in the hearts of good women is the power that sanctifies and purifies them.

As the child on its mother's knee looks up into that mother's face, full of perfect confidence and love, so that mother, grateful for the blessing that heaven has sent, looks up to God above, her eyes reflecting the absolute trust that she sees in the face of her child.

The **Happiest Woman** OF all living beings on earth, the happiest, most richly blessed with true wealth, is the mother upon whose breast there lies the new-born child, feeble, wailing, but trusting implicitly to her, as good men and women trust to the Providence of God.

Happy the young mother, whose soul is pure, whose earthly love is concentrated upon her family, and whose spiritual love is fixed on high.

Or, if there be on earth a more happy being than a young mother with her new-born child, it is the old gray-haired woman whose sons and daughters call her blessed, reflecting in their lives her teaching, not in words alone but in

every act, honoring their father and their mother.

The Two Greatest Words PURITY and LOVE. Those are the most powerful words in all language.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." That is the most precious promise—to see God and to live with God through all eternity.

PURITY and LOVE, those are the magic words; love of your neighbor, love of your children, love of father and mother, and crowning all, LOVE OF GOD.

Of all things material and spiritual, purity comes first. Pure air, pure water, pure sunlight, PURE IN HEART.

Because good women typify purity and love, they are held of all things on earth highest in respect by good men. Theirs are the highest qualities.

To ambitious young men, you quote: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings."

That is for ambition, to encourage worldly effort.

But rich beyond all promises are those eleven short words that make up the eighth verse of the 5th Chapter of St. Matthew:

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

Byron Said It

It has been well said by Byron, a poet not always to be admired, "Yes, love indeed is light from heaven, a spark of that immortal fire, with angels shared, by Allah given, to lift from earth our low desire."

Replace the heathen word "Allah" with the Christian God and you have a true description of love that "lifts from earth our low desire."

Purity, faith, hope go hand in hand. You remember Milton's lines:

"O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings!"

I Meet

Another Chapter in The Life Story of a Leading Lady

MY FELLOW-PLAYERS often declared that the snapping blue eyes I had inherited from my Irish ancestors were a constant challenge to all men, young and old. This I dismissed as flattery, just as I did their warm praise of the beauty and charm they insisted were mine in certain rôles. For a long time such words meant little to me. I was still completely under the shadow of my first experience with a man to whom breaking a girl's heart was just a quickly-forgotten adventure.

I awakened to the truth of what they said—that beauty makes its impression upon men's hearts even at a distance—under circumstances most unusual. I was just entering my twenties when I met the Prince. I was still a romantic girl, despite my years upon the stage. The encounter had for me all the romance that imagination could build about this young man, around whom so much legion and ceremony centered in his own land. In this country he traversed sea and land and river as one born just a simple citizen.

Like myself he was young. And like myself, he lived in a sphere quite apart from the work-a-day world with its simpler experiences and emotions.

ONE Saturday afternoon, when we were traveling in the South, I told our manager that I wouldn't go on as usual to the next town with the company after the night performance. Instead of spending Sunday and most of Monday in a commonplace town, I preferred to be a guest of the big gray hotel on the mountain top. He turned eyes of misgiving upon me. But the leading woman of a road company may possess authority little less than a star. So I had my way.

A trusty old black driver, chosen for his reliability, drove my hired hack slowly in the moonlight along the winding upward road. Half-way up, there swung past us four men in a big touring car. Two men wore uniforms. One was a huge, impassive person, with close-cut white hair. On the rear seat, beside the big, impassive man, was a slim, blond youth. His head was high. Over him hung a mantle of gravity that seemed too heavy for his youth.

His Royal Highness was waiting . . . "This is the spot for meeting sun goddesses," he said.



the Prince



"Personages, no doubt," I said to my maid. There was no response. Zelda had fallen asleep.

As we drove slowly over the crest of the mountain and came in sight of the hotel, the low, full moon shone above a scene of ceremony. A tall man came out onto the veranda to receive the party. He was the proprietor of the hotel. Behind him was a group of assistants and servants.

The four travelers stepped out of the automobile. They climbed the wide, stone steps to the veranda. The blond youth walked ahead. The group gathered about him and bowed low to the boy. His slim, straight figure, standing in the midst of that obsequious circle, seemed curiously alone and pathetic. My throat tightened. I felt a tear on my cheek.

A flood of light and a blare of music poured from the wide entrance. The slim figure moved through the path of light. His taller and broader companions followed him, and hid him from my view.

OUR old, high-hatted driver brought our carriage to the stone stairway with a flourish. He stepped from his high seat, held the reins with one hand and lifted his hat with the other. White curls tumbled about his withered, smiling black face.

"Here yo' is, ladies. Allow me to welcome you-all to the most beautiful spot on God's footstool." He bowed again. "A spot you-all is mighty fitted to adorn."

I was installed in my room, my servant assigned to her quarters, when there came a tap at my door.

"Pardon, Miss. There is dancing in the grand ball-room. All the guests are invited. The Prince has arrived and he and his staff will be present." The messenger in hotel uniform bowed and departed.

Suddenly my weariness, after a week of playing in the town in the valley below, left me. The sound of music beckoned me with pulsing fingers. The Prince, who had been touring the country to study its towns and farms, mines and herds, had stopped here on his winging tour. I must see the young visitor who had made each beholder his friend.

Would he see me in the crowd? The South is a land of beautiful girls and exquisite women. Would he?

When my maid had dressed me I surveyed myself in the mirror. Well-shaped head, always held high. Moss-thick, shining hair. Firm white hands with tapering fingers. A gown of rose-colored tulle. A rose hanging over each ear. Little satin dancing pumps over flesh-colored silk stockings.

I came back to my eyes. Unusually large, unusually full, lights like uncertain torches danced through them. Deep, clear eyes with a laugh in them. Something else, too—a personal note that seemed to say to everyone, "It's you and I, and let the world go hang."

Every man I had met had yielded in some degree to those eyes. Some were even confounded by them; others were embarrassed. But all responded. I was confident the Prince would look at me.

He came into the ball-room, a boyish figure in black, flanked by the two men whom I had seen in uniform in the automobile, the massive one with the close-cut white hair at his right. His bright, gray glance swept the silent room. Along the walls sat rows of maids and matrons of the South, born to fascinate, practiced in the arts of fascination. His keen, impersonal gaze followed the walls lined with grace and beauty, then onto the group at the end where the moon sent its tender glow between parted curtains of silk. The scent of pines swept in between the curtains—pungent, stimulating. There was a flutter of fans, whispers. They stopped. The Prince was exercising his privilege of choice from the garden. Which flower would he pluck?

Again the long, sweeping, searching glance. I thought, "What a scene for a play!"

THERE had been a choice—for His Highness was crossing the room, followed by four men; the two who had been in uniform, the massive old man and a stranger. The procession slackened as it neared the end of the room, opposite the musician's stand. The fourth man in attendance moved ahead. He passed the windows, where the pine-scented wind poured in its poignant fragrance. He passed the debutantes in white, and their lovely sisters in blue and yellow and green, and their mothers in gowns of iridescent net. He stopped before me.

"Pardon me. His Royal Highness desires to be presented. May I have your name and your consent to present him?"

He bowed and smiled to the Prince and his escort. They approached me. I rose and courtesied. The slim boy in black bowed low. A smile chased the bored gravity from his face. It was a sunny, lovable face, from which fair, sunburned hair was combed severely back.

"The next number is a waltz. May I have the honor?" His voice, though boyish, had a deep, tender note.

I laid my hand on the thin, muscular arm. Deliberately I raised my eyes—eyes that conquered at sight. His Royal Highness' lips parted uncertainly. A tinge of color rose to his smooth cheeks. His arm passed about my waist, and my hand sought his shoulder.

THE slow, rhythmic music was like the loud beating of a pulse. The dusky men, gathered about the piano on the musician's stand, played as with low-keyed tom-toms. Every note was a heartbeat.

We danced slowly, in perfect unison. When we had adjusted our steps I again turned my eyes upon his. Ice-blue they were, but mine could melt them. I was sure of that.

"I think Your Royal Highness passed me on the mountain road this evening," I said.

"I saw you," he said in low, even tones. "I called you 'The Maid of the Moonlight.'"

"Weren't you tired after your long journey?"

"We are young, Miss Coman, and you know youth isn't tired long. Besides, I hoped to meet someone here tonight."

"Someone?"

His blue eyes smiled back into mine. They were melting.

"You," he whispered.

As we passed the occupants of chairs along the walls, snatches of low-voiced conversation reached us. "She's an actress—I saw her play in the city last week."

"His Royal Highness should study the social register of the towns he visits."

"Yes, she is beautiful. But it is not a spiritual beauty."

My face hidden by his shoulder, I smiled. The young

man in process of becoming a King must have heard, but he ignored the remarks.

He danced with me as often as etiquette permitted—three times in all. He was taken to supper by a dowager in black sequins who owned an old name and twenty plantations on the Mississippi. I saw the blue eyes that had melted seek me. I slipped away to my room and ate my supper in bed.

The next morning I was awakened by my maid laying on my coverlet a basket of half-blown roses. They were chaste white roses pressed against the dark red petals of jacquimenots and the splendor of American beauties. The card that lay among them bore a simple name beneath a royal crest.

"Will the Moonlight Maid of the Mountainside," it read, "graciously tell her humble admirer whether she will be at the fountain in the rose garden at eleven and whether he may meet her there?"

On hotel stationery, I wrote: "The Mountain Maid had expected to explore the rose garden and may be near the fountain at eleven."

MY MAID was close behind me when I reached the fountain. As I raised my hand to arrange a lock of my hair, she recognized the signal and drew back. His Royal Highness was waiting beside the fountain, a smile in his eyes, the sunshine falling upon his uncovered blond head, his thinness supplemented by his white flannel suit. "This is the spot for meeting sun gods," I cried almost unconsciously.

"And with moon and sun goddesses," he returned with ardor. "Miss Coman, I—"

He reached for my hand, suspended his half-way—and then his eyes, grown hard, swept the hotel windows.

As he turned his face back to mine, it had lost its ruddiness and youth.

"Be thankful you aren't of royal blood," he said. His voice was harsh. "No criminal is ever watched more vigilantly by detectives than a king's son by his suite. Don't look. It would embarrass you. On the third tier of windows I see my too faithful mastiff, Lord James. On the fifth is one of my terriers, Viscount Blinky; and looking around the corner of the veranda is the rest of my bodyguard, the bull-terrier, Stuffy. There is but one thing to do. Go back and collect them and ride in a quarette."

He lifted his hat from his scowling forehead, bowed and went back to the hotel. While Zelda and I were yet in the rose garden, there was the clatter of hoofs and the young figure surrounded by three larger ones set off toward the valley. Three hours later, from behind my window shade I saw the party return. His Royal Highness' face was sullen, in contrast with the alertness in the countenances of his suite.

Luncheon was served in the royal apartments. We heard much clattering of servants there. When I returned from a walk with my faithful and convenient Zelda, a pale young man sat at one of the windows. I scanned the wide verandas. No one was there save an old man, taking a nap beneath a handkerchief covering his face. I drew a wild mountain rose from the girdle of my white dress and tossed it toward his high window. His eyes followed it till it was lost in the grass. He did not return my smile. He simply rose and stood gravely looking down, apparently at the lawn below. A dark figure appeared at the next window.

DINNER that evening was also served in the royal suite. I sat with Zelda on the wide stone veranda that had the sky for a roof. I looked up at the far-away stars. I thought of the discomfort of the remainder of my tour in the South. I wondered whether

it "would hurt me with the managers" if I resigned and went back to New York. Would they brand me as "a luxury hound" and undependable?

The clatter of impatient heels on the stone of the veranda startled me. A face showed white and stern in the moonlight. At a motion from me Zelda vanished from sight. The Prince stood before me. Then he bowed and lifted my hand to his lips.

"Is it possible that there is no one about?" I laughed. "Are you sure there are no eyes watching this precious spot?"

He sank on the stool at my feet. "I must speak quickly. They are sure to follow me. Their task is to help me to maintain my dignity. They wouldn't think it dignified for me to sit on a stool at the feet of —"

"An actress," I ended for him.

"Of any woman." His tone was charged with impatience.

"Let me tell you how much I admire you. The moment I saw that perfect profile in the moonlight I knew that you were like no other woman I had ever seen. I love you."

"Is your Royal Highness perhaps a philanderer?"

He seized both my hands and covered them with kisses. "No, no, no," he said desperately. "I am sailing for Europe next week. Won't you go before or after I sail?"

"But why, Your Highness?"

"Don't Highness me. It is you who are Highness. Because I love you."

"Would you marry me morganatically?"

The boy winced. The tradition of generations had received a blow. But he clung to my hands, looked into my eyes, and answered: "Yes."

"I have my art. I would not sacrifice that for a man,

"Thank you for loving me," I said softly. "I am two years older, and ten years wiser. Go back to your country and forget me."

however charming, whom I had known less than twenty-four hours."

I leaned toward him. He was no longer a prince. He was only a love-sick boy. I stroked his fair, sun-burnt hair, and touched his damp white forehead with my lips.

"COME to Europe then," he coaxed. Hope flared like a torch in his blue eyes. "You will have as great opportunities in my country. When—someday I can help you there. This is a young land and it loves only youth. In my country we love our actresses when they are old."

I laughed. "That is a time long away," I said. "Thank you though, dear boy. Thank you for loving me. I am two years older than you, and ten years wiser. Go back to your father and country and forget me."



I Meet the Prince

As he poured his impassioned plea, unhidden tears arose in the blue eyes that had melted as they looked into mine. And looking back into them I seemed to see, as one might in a magic pool, a scene in which Charles Marston had stalked in grim tragedy upon the stage of my life. What a contrast between this slender, fair-haired figure before me and the dark-browed and forbidding countenance of Marston. Though my hands clasped his I turned my head away.

Heavy foot-steps heralded the determined approach of one of the Prince's guards. When he spoke his tone was anxious and respectful.

Unabashed the lad rose. He bowed to me. He turned a face that had grown kindly upon "his mastiff."

"I shall follow," he said coldly, and turned his back upon the nobleman. The huge man withdrew from hearing distance, but his black, waiting figure bulked against the grilled door of the hotel entrance.

"Life seemed splendid to me last night. But now its colors have faded," he said.

Another sob filled his throat. Anguish was stamped upon his face. I turned from the sight of it. Light, hurrying steps, dying out, told me that I was alone.

From my window I watched him, in cloak and cap, step into a waiting automobile. The same three men surrounded him.

I never saw the fair-haired boy again. But in a thousand lovers I have never found quite the same touch of knightly sentiment.

DESPITE my tragic experience with Charles Marston five years before, I was still a young girl at heart. However, the constant dissipation of my fellow-artists I observed without reproach.

They say that constant water wears away a stone. And when I came back to New York City after this southern trip, I found myself unable to turn a deaf ear to the siren call of pleasure.

After-theatre parties are the danger signals waved by paternal stage directors to

frighten and safeguard young beauties who come to the metropolis to go into the chorus. I knew that. I agreed to it. That the warning might apply to me never occurred to me until after my meeting with "The Toad."

I had heard of him. He was the backer of one of the leading theatrical firms; a man of enormous wealth and of tremendous influence. A shake of his head could fling an aspirant back into the "sticks." A nod would give her what every actor craves—"the big chance."

He was a short, squat man. His face was heavy, his cheeks were pendulous. His mottled skin and spreading figure had earned his nickname.

"I'm asking a few friends up to my house for supper Sunday night," he said to me one time. "I will be delighted if you will be one of my guests."

Why did I accept? I loathed the man, I loathed his life.

Was it because I was lonesome—and alone in the city at the time?

[To be concluded]

The Girl My Wife Hated

[Continued from page 15]

Gorman, and she made it plain to me that she did not approve of Mr. Gorman.

"You see that your relationship with Sam Gorman is strictly business," she said, "and don't you ever let me hear of your going on any of his wild parties. He is utterly without a sense of moral values."

"He's a great man," I said.

"Great? Not the way he acts," she insisted.

I was willing to concede that Sam Gorman was pretty much as Grace had said, but I resented her remarks, her attempts to tell me what men I should or should not associate with. I felt that I knew how to take care of myself. And didn't I owe much of my success to Sam Gorman?

But there was no doubt in Grace's mind as to the reason for my success. She gave herself all the credit, but it was plain to see that she was suspicious of all my actions. She could not get it out of her head that I was not susceptible and easily influenced. She was always referring to the girls I had been fairly intimate with before we were married.

She could not convince herself that I was not continuing what she thought had been my youthful philandering, or that there were not other women in whom I was now interested.

THEN my wife conceived the idea that the most flagrant affair of all was going on right under her eyes and that she had paid no attention to it. She suddenly suspected that I had been carrying on with Marian Harbor—and that Marian had been angling for me. This despite the fact that Marian had a perfectly good banker husband. But Grace figured that as Marian was not more than twenty-six and Mark Harbor was past fifty, Marian had married him for his money and because he was the president of the Inland National Bank.

I never knew how Grace felt about Marian until she burst into a tirade one day and accused me of misbehaving with Marian at Lake Geneva!

"If you aren't playing eighteen holes of golf together, you make up two of a

foursome and go off on motor jaunts together."

Of course this was utterly false. People talked about Marian, but my name was never joined with hers. She was always having a crowd of men around her. But she had never shown any interest in any one man—certainly none in me. She was just a good fellow.

We went up to Lake Geneva for a few weeks—Grace and I—and Marian was there, while her husband was still in the city, working in the summer's heat. Marian hailed us in what Grace considered a shameless manner. We had hardly reached the veranda of the club-house when Marian called:

"How about a round at six o'clock in the morning, Ralph?"

"Fine!" I said, being hungry for some exercise.

GRACE did not object, but after I had left the next morning I had the most curious sensation of being watched. How true my premonition was I did not learn until later.

Mark Harbor came up from the city Friday evening and was sitting on the veranda talking with Grace, as Marian and I came in from a tramp.

Grace admired Mr. Harbor. He was a gentleman of the old school, a man after her own heart. She was always holding him up to me as an example.

I don't know how long he and Grace had been talking or what they had been talking about, though I did learn later. When I first caught sight of them I was ambling along as fast as my bulk would permit and Marian was running after me pelting me with little green apples. That is, she pelted me when her aim was good.

"Hello, daddy," she called out when she saw her husband, and she ran and perched herself on the arm of his chair.

Mr. Harbor greeted me cordially in the smiling offhand manner that gave him the name of being a "human banker," and then we all went in to dress for dinner.

"Don't forget, Marian, after your hardworking husband has the first dance, I get most of the rest of them," I called.

"Naturally," laughed Marian.

I was getting into my dinner jacket when my wife said:

"Do you know you haven't kissed me since the day you arrived—five days ago?"

"Oh, I'm sorry," I said, and I started to make amends, but my wife held me away.

"I don't want the kisses you have to be reminded of," she said. "I'll wager you didn't have to be reminded to kiss Marian the other morning when you went behind the trees near the fifth hole."

Was I startled? I should say I was, particularly after my feeling of being watched.

"Where did you get the idea I kissed Marian that morning—or any other time?" I demanded.

"Because a wife is given that sense of knowing things she is not intended to know. Ralph, do you realize that our marriage is just about on the rocks?"

"What a ridiculous thing to say!"

"By no means," insisted Grace. "No woman with any spirit can stand idly by and see her husband make a fool of himself over other women."

"Good heavens, Grace, you talk as if you were out of your mind. What women have I made a fool of myself about?"

"The good Lord only knows," said Grace. "Just now it is Marian—"

"Suppose you leave Marian's name out of this," I said.

"There! There!" she cried. "That proves it. When a man starts to defend a woman like that, it proves he is guilty. Good heavens, Ralph, can't you see she is just playing with you—as she has played with a dozen other men?"

"Look here," I cried. "You see evil where evil does not exist. I am not carrying on, as you call it, with Marian Harbor, and I don't want to hear any more about it."

"That's right, strike me, why don't you? You act as if you want to, and you might as well add physical violence to the mental agony you have caused me."

Now, suddenly, her strength gave out. Her body quivered and she fell upon a couch, her face streaming with tears.

[To be concluded]

Pills Never Made Muscles

Wishing Never Brought Strength

No one can paste muscles onto your arms and shoulders. If you wish a strong, healthy body, you must work for it. And if you don't have one, you are doomed to a life of misery.

Modern science has taught us that we must keep our bodies physically fit or our mental powers will soon exhaust themselves. That is why the successful business man resorts to golf and other active pastimes.

Examine Yourself

Do you have the strong, robust body which keeps you *fit* at all times to tackle the daily tasks confronting you—always looking for bigger things to do? Do you jump out of bed in the morning full of pep; with a keen appetite and a longing to enter the day's activities? Do you finish your daily tasks still thrilling with pep and vitality? Or do you arise only half awake and go through a languid day?

PEP UP!

Don't let it get you, fellows. Come on out of that shell and make a real *he* man of yourself. Build out those skinny arms and that flat chest. Let me put some real pep in your old backbone and put an armor plate of muscle on you that will make you actually thrill with ambition. I can do it. I guarantee to do it. I will put one full inch on your arm in just 30 days and from then on, just watch 'em grow. This is no idle boast. It's the real works. A genuine guarantee. Come on now. Get on the job and make me prove it.



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(Please write or print plainly.)

The Cost of a Coat

[Continued from page 77]

salesman made all speed in fetching out the coat, which even to my inexperienced eyes was a perfectly marvelous creation. The mere feel of the silky fur, regardless of its intrinsic value and exquisite fashioning, started ecstatic thrills along my spine.

Ninety thousand francs! I caught my breath at the price.

"We'll take it, I think," said Raymond quietly. I looked up in astonishment. "I'll pay you for it now. Send it to the Meurice."

"Raymond," I cried. "What on earth are you doing?"

He looked at me with surprise in his own eyes. "But don't you like the coat?"

"But we can't afford it—it's madness!"

"I can afford it," he said rather coldly, I thought. And before my amazed gaze counted out five thousand dollars in American bills of a denomination I had never before seen.

And before I quite knew what was happening the coat was paid for and we started for home. But as we got out of the taxi at the hotel, another taxi stopped immediately behind us. From that, two men dismounted, and ran toward us. I was so engrossed with them that I didn't notice Raymond, until they ran up and each took him by an arm.

"What does this mean?" I heard him say, and his face turned suddenly white as death.

"You are under arrest on the complaint of the police of New York."

"You've got the wrong man," he said.

"You are Raymond Blount, wanted in New York for the theft of securities from your father's safe deposit box. You had better come along peaceably."

His eyes met mine in an expression that I can never forget. In that brief glance, I knew that the charge was a true one. This, then, had been Raymond's inheritance! How plain it all was now, and what a fool I had been not to have guessed it long ago.

"Raymond, why did you do it?" I cried in anguish.

"Because I loved you, and there was no other way," he confessed, as if under torture. And in that moment, I think I loved him more than I ever did before. At that moment I would have given my life for his freedom.

After that I don't know exactly what happened. I have a dim recollection of struggling with those two burly men—then suddenly everything became blank.

WHEN I came back to consciousness, I was in my room at the hotel. The darkness weighed upon my benumbed brain like a pall. I thought at first I was back in my little bedroom in Salton—until the echoes and cries of the street awakened me further. After a little I got up and snapped on the light.

On my dresser I found Stanley Thorne's card, with this inscription:

"My boundless sympathy in your trouble. When you are stronger, call on me for assistance."

My recoil at the sight of that hateful handwriting cannot be described. I had rather any man in the world know of Raymond's disgrace than Thorne. How much did he know? How came that card there? Then there came a knock at the door, and I opened it upon a man who introduced himself as one of the assistant managers of the hotel. He held out to me a piece of paper.

"Madame's account to date," he explained in very good English.

"But I'm not leaving the hotel yet," I protested, in sincere amazement.

"I regret the necessity, but—"

He needed to say no more. I understood at last that I was no longer wanted there. Well, that was only natural. He couldn't afford to have this disgrace of ours come back on his hotel. The bill already amounted to some hundreds of francs. I looked for my pocket-book, wildly recalling that Raymond had practically all the money. In my purse I found a five dollar bill, two twenty franc notes and some small mixed silver—not enough by half to pay the bill.

There flashed across my desperation the thought of that sable coat. It didn't occur to me then that it had been paid for with stolen funds. It merely offered the only escape from my predicament.

Had the coat come yet from the shop?

This Month's Fight!

WE EXPECT to continue exposing social evils and hope you will support our efforts. Scores of letters tell us you back our stand in the October issue.

The bad conditions existing in many offices where girls are forced to work has been called to our attention.

Do you know of any office where conditions of ventilation and light demand improvement? Do you work in a place which is not what it should be?

If you do, write to us at once. We will treat your letter in confidence and will use the influence of this magazine to see that your local authorities investigate.

I was on the point of asking, but held my tongue. If this man knew about it, he would most likely turn it over to the police. I dared not ask. But at any cost I must stay here until the coat came.

"I have a friend here in Paris," I said, stalling for time, "who will advance me any amount of money. Can't you send a messenger to him for it? Here. I have his card."

Almost with a flourish I presented it to the hotel man. He looked at it suspiciously, but finally put it into his pocket.

Thorne came within half an hour. With too ready sympathy he explained to me that he had happened to be calling on me at the hotel when Raymond was arrested; when I fainted from my exertions of struggling with the police, he had brought me to my room and had called a doctor.

Upon the next two weeks I look back with utter horror. They were the blackest days of my entire life. Not once was I permitted to see Raymond.

The sable coat I never found. I went back to the shop the next day after I left the hotel, and found it actually had been delivered to the hotel. But beyond that I could not trace it.

The more I was dependent on Thorne, the more I hated him. But what could

I do?—I knew no other living soul in all that country.

How many times it came to me in the darkness of the night that just a friend—or the sable coat—could have saved me. But I had neither. I threw myself into my new life feverishly, hoping perhaps that it would utterly consume me, together with my lost girlhood and happiness.

WINTER found us at Monte Carlo for the Mi Carême—that festival of joy known the wide world over. And there in the most heavenly place and at the most heavenly time on earth, I saw my sable coat again.

I couldn't mistake it. The perfection of its fur and style was burned into my brain. I knew it the moment I saw it. The woman who wore it was of a class apparent at a glance. She happened to be alone when I saw her, having tea by herself on the sunny veranda of the Métropole.

Soon I entered into conversation with her. She had no English at all, and I had very halting French.

"That coat. Where did you get it?" I asked. "It's mine. It's my coat. It was stolen from me. Tell me where you got it, or I shall call a gendarme. There is one now."

"Stolen?" she repeated in a shrill voice. "It was never stolen. It was a present to me from a friend of mine."

"What friend? Whoever it was, stole it. I shall call the police."

"Stanley Thorne—he gave it to me. I believe you know him." She could not conceal the hatred in her eyes as she said that name.

"Stanley Thorne!" I cried after her. "Impossible!" And yet I knew in my own mind that it was the truth.

SLOWLY, like the unveiling of a clearly painted picture, it came to me now. On the afternoon of Raymond's arrest, the coat had been delivered, and he had taken it away without question.

"There are other things that may be worth your knowing," the woman spoke again. "You supplanted me in his esteem; now listen to what I have to tell you." Her eyes flashed with jealous hate.

"What have you to tell me?" I asked. "It is he—Thorne—who betrayed your husband to the police," she said.

The fact was an iron hand at my throat, making my mind and body numb.

"He betrayed your husband," she went on maliciously, "so that he might have you."

"Are you sure?" I gasped.

She laughed in queer fashion, and seemed to shrink a little away from me. Could she have known, with woman's gift of certain prophecy, what was passing in my mind at that moment?

For I shot Thorne that night in the hotel—shot him through the heart.

I shot him not in anger, nor even in revenge, but in some sort of exaltation of mind that told me I was appointed by Providence to take him off the earth.

The rest is soon told. Six years in a French prison, in solitary confinement; then a charity passage back to America, arranged for by the chaplain of the prison. Here I am today; a woman aged beyond three times my years, but free and—yes, even happy.

For after all, happiness is a matter of contrast.

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NO, you DON'T have to make hard work of that job of yours—you DON'T have to blunder thru one task after another, slowly gathering "experience" by that ancient and painful method of "trial-and-error."

Other men—no older and no brainier than you—are handling similar jobs with all the ease of veterans. Moreover, their specialized knowledge, their facility, their confidence, is rapidly marking them out as the coming big executives in their respective companies.

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"A continuous marathon"—that's what Hudson Maxim, distinguished inventor, scientist and author, calls it—"a foot-race, a hand-race and a brain-race, in which every individual is running against every other individual *and against time* for the rewards of pleasure, comfort, happiness."

Now what is the *shrewd* thing to do—in view of the fact that to save your life you can't succeed except by matching YOUR ability with the ability of COUNTLESS OTHERS?

Why, to SEIZE UPON EVERY POSSIBLE ADVANTAGE!

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Fundamentally, the difference between success and failure in business lies in the amount of *trained ability* a man possesses and applies.

Get that training and *apply* it and you have changed your long, slow foot-race into an *automobile-race*, if you please—with *you* in the forefront, rapidly outdis-

tancing every man who has been so short-sighted as to neglect to train.

Are You Living Up to Your Opportunities?

We at LaSalle sometimes weary of continually reminding men of what they already know but fail to act upon.

But we arouse ourselves to new efforts by the thought that each reminder helps



to waken in hundreds of men the realization of their potential capabilities—rouses them to a sense of their latent power.

Forgetting, for the moment, the gains in salary reported by LaSalle-trained men (and the *average* increase, as shown by our records, is 89 per cent), consider what it means to a man to be able sincerely and conscientiously to write such sentences as these:

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"The knowledge I have gained has already been of greatest value to me, as I have an entirely different view of life and am beginning to do some thinking, where formerly I was just drifting."

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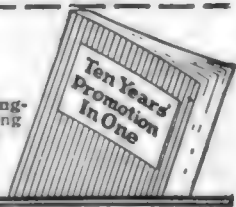
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Anything Can Happen

[Continued from page 27]

the forehead. He hadn't been shot in that cave, nor from any distance. He'd probably been killed as he sat by McFadden's camp fire; and the body dragged up to that cave. The cave wasn't very far from the flat where we camped the first night out.

Of course I didn't say anything of what I'd found to the tenderfeet. It wouldn't do any good to have them running around taking pictures and talking. I just kept quiet.

Then there was something about that skeleton—something sort of funny about that whole cave. It seemed to be waiting, waiting, waiting. I went back there three or four times to make sure. You know we feel things here in the mountains. I wanted to take that skeleton out and give it a decent burial, but somehow I couldn't touch it. Bert Sprague's skull kept grinning up at me—waiting. I couldn't figure it out, but I kept my own counsel and decided I wouldn't do anything rash.

Then one day the ranger hunted me up. "Bill," said he, "there's some high-muck-a-muck from the railroad comin' in on a fishin' trip. Seems he's a big squeeze on the road an' that he knows about the fishin' over on the Pedra Blanca. Morton, the station agent, told me to get you and have you meet this bird at the train on the tenth of next month, with a pack string all ready and provisions for a two weeks' trip."

Somehow right then and there I began to have a feeling who it was; but I didn't say anything.

"All right," I said, "I'll be there, but don't let that bird count on a full two weeks in the hills this time of year. The snows'll be starting any time now, and when we get into the Pedra Blanca this time of year, we keep one eye on the weather—and out we come at the first change."

SURE enough, it was McFadden. We just feel those things here in the mountains, and I wasn't surprised at all.

He didn't recognize me. I'd never "registered" on his mind anyhow. At first I thought his conscience might be bothering him—sort of drawing him back to the scene of the crime and all that. But, bosh! that fellow didn't have any conscience. He'd remembered something about the good fishing over on the Pedra Blanca and wanted some more of it—that was all.

I made up my mind I'd leave him alone as much as possible. Just let those great big mountains commence to soak into his soul and see what happened.

This trip in was different from the other one. At first he just mooched along on his horse, looking down on me as only a packer; but after a couple of days he commenced to get dying for someone to talk to. I could see the symptoms coming on when he commenced to talk. I managed to keep the string between us on the trail.

At nights it was different. He had a chance to talk around the camp fire, and talk he did. At first he was just talking to keep in practice, telling me about the city and all that. He didn't say anything about Jean, and I used to wonder about her—but I never asked any questions.

I wanted to hear something about Jean, but somehow I dreaded to have him mention her name. He never did.

AFTER a few days, his talking got different. He began to talk sort of nervous like. Seemed to be scared to be alone with his thoughts and the mountains. The

mountains always do that to you if you give them a chance.

"The veneer's wearing off," I would say to myself. "We'll see what's underneath before so very long."

I still left him alone all I could. Letting him have lots of silence, and keeping him right in among the mountains.

He didn't say anything about having been in the hills before, and I never let on. I worked into the Pedra Blanca country from the other end, over the Pindola country, and he commenced to get good fishing right from the start.

That was another thing that got under my skin. He'd catch any Lord's quantity of fish and then, after they were good and dead, pick out the best and throw the others back.

I said to him once, "Why don't you throw them back before they die—the little ones, I mean."

He didn't gain nor anything, just looked kind of dreamy.

"Oh, I like to feel 'em kickin' around in the basket. Sort o' makes me feel good to feel 'em floppin' around."

I didn't mention it again, but I kept away from him. I made lots of excuses to break away just when he'd get a talking streak started. Finally he got so he'd neglect the fishing to follow me around so-as to have somebody to talk to.

"Guess he's about ripe by this time," I thought to myself, and headed down into the limestone ledges. We camped right there on the flat below the cave. I could see he was getting mighty fidgety. He kept looking up there at the white cliff all pitted with thousands of little caves.

"Better keep away from that white ledge with all those caves in it," I told him. "That's a dangerous country up there. There's loose soil for hundreds of feet above that limestone ledge, and lots of times the dirt slips down and covers up half the whole ledge."

He looked up sort of eager. Seemed like he wanted to talk about that ledge.

"Anybody ever get caught in those caves in a landslide? You know, ever get killed—that is, did anybody ever turn up missin' in this country?"

"Sure," says I, after hesitating just long enough to make him nervous.

"Tell me about him," he comes back quick.

"Oh, there was lots of them," I told him, casual-like.

"Oh," he says, rather short.

I walked off.

THAT afternoon he was moody and quiet for awhile, then he went off for a little fishing. When he came back, he's as cordial as Old Man Cordial, himself. Right away I commenced to see that gold tooth flash out from under that black mustache.

"He's getting ready to 'sell' me on something now," I told myself.

That night he sat around the camp fire and talked and talked and talked. Not about anything he wanted to talk about, nor about anything I wanted to listen to, but he'd talk just to hear the sound of his own voice.

Finally he got clean talked out. He was silent for a little longer than usual, and all of a sudden the silence got him—you know how it does. After that he just sat there shivering.

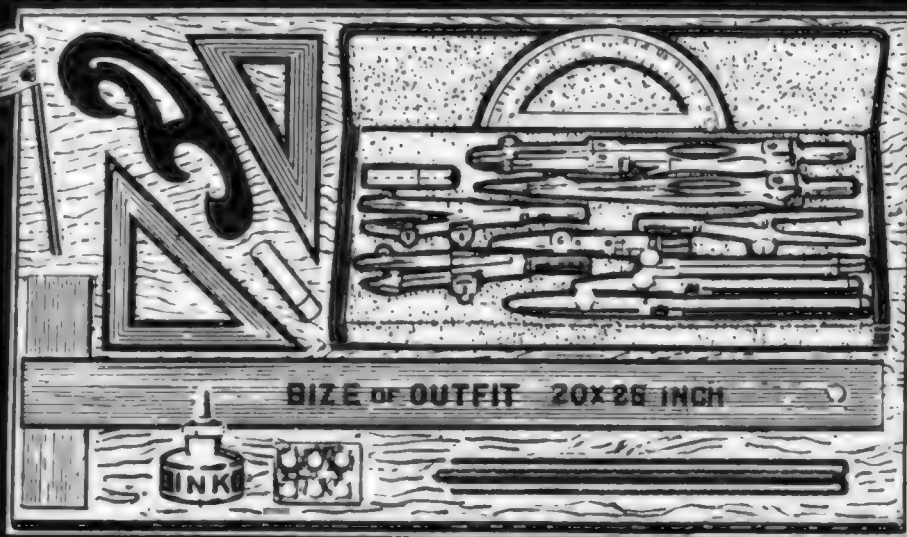
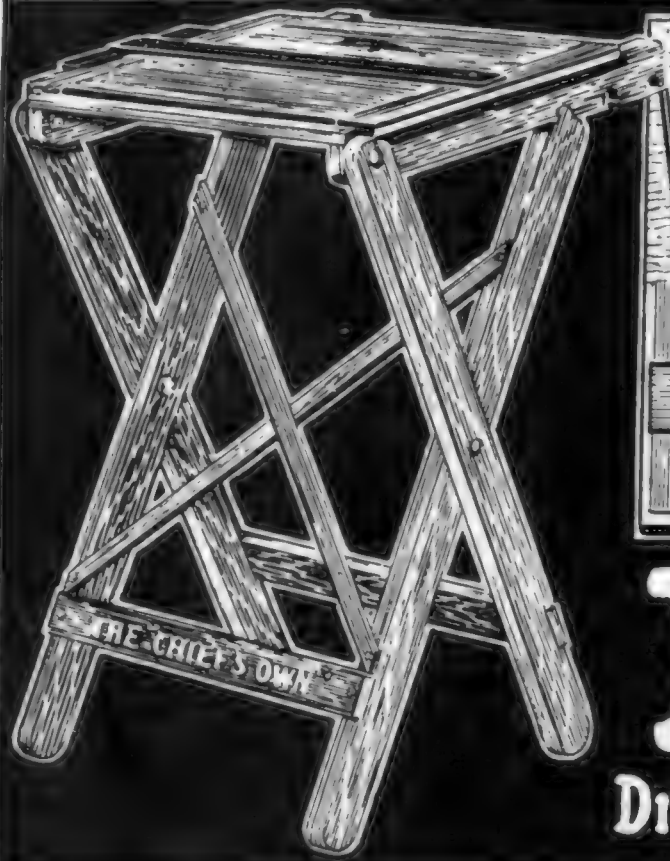
"For heaven's sake put some wood on that fire, and make a blaze," he snapped, and his voice had gone jumpy.

[Continued on page 90]

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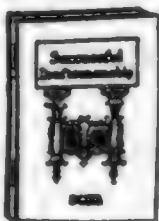
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[Continued from page 88]

I got up and stretched.
"Too late," I said. "We'll turn in."
With that I flopped into my blankets and rolled over. As there wasn't anything left for him to do, he sneaked into his own blankets.

That night he didn't sleep. It was quiet and still, and the big stars looked down right into your soul. Stars don't blink out in the California mountains. They just look straight down and don't so much as flicker an eyelash.

About twelve o'clock he called over to me.

"You awake, Bill," he asked, soft and low.

I waited a minute.

"I am now," I said.

He thought that over, then it registered.

"Oh," he said, short like.

We waited awhile. The stock was moving around, munching the short grass. The stream tumbled and splashed in a sort of a hushed rhythm. A big rock broke loose up above the limestone ledge and came thundering down carrying a bunch of loose soil along with it.

"I used to own a bunch of the stock in the Blue Gulch mine around here," he began. "Ever hear of it?"

"Sure," I said. "It's only about five miles down the canyon. They're working on it a little bit now. Some slick promoters got hold of it, sold a lot of stock around here, and then closed it down and froze out all the little stockholders. Now the promoters have gobbled it up again, so they're started working."

"Oh," he said.

We kept quiet for awhile.

Suddenly a mountain lion screamed up on Bald Mountain. The air got awful still, and the noise of the stream seemed to peter out. In the silence you could just hear those mountains keeping quiet and waiting—waiting. The stars seemed to be creeping nearer.

"Don't those slides ever cover up them caves?" he asked. Seemed like his tone was rather anxious.

"Lots of times. Then the slide keeps working down the creek and after awhile they uncover again."

I could almost hear him thinking.

"If some good, big earthquake or something tore the whole top of that hill loose, wouldn't those caves stay covered?"

"How should I know?" I came back. "They ain't done it so far, but that's no sign they never will. No one goes up on that mountainside above the caves. It's too dangerous."

THERE was frost in the air, and I knew it was due to snow most any time. The cold kept breaking loose chunks off that cliff, and every few minutes a bunch of earth came sliding and rattling on down over the ledge.

"Bill," said McFadden, in a hushed way, "what's that big star overhead that keeps looking straight down on us? Seems like it was boring a hole right in my forehead."

"I knew its name once," I told him, "but I'm glad I've forgotten it. It's just a part of God's universe, and it's better to think of God when you look at a star than to think of the name of some astronomer."

"I know, but it seems so sorta close," he returned.

"Sure," I came back at him. "that's because you get so close to God out here."

"Oh."

I figured that was a good place to leave him, so I rolled over and went to sleep.

When I woke up I found that he'd moved his blankets under a live oak to get away from that star.

J. Loring McFadden hadn't slept well. He didn't say much, but his eyes were bloodshot. However, he seemed sort of cheerful, and treated me as if I were almost human. The sun glinted off that gold tooth of his whenever I looked his way.

"He's getting ready to sell me on something," I thought.

This time he sprang a new one.

"I want to ride down to the mine and pick up some newspapers if they've got any," he told me, flashing that gold tooth. "If you wouldn't mind puttin' the kyaks on one o' the pack horses, I'll throw the stuff in there and bring it up with me. You had better stay here and watch the stock an' the camp stuff."

I started to tell him he didn't need to take anything except the saddle-bags on the back of his own saddle to bring out all the papers he'd want—but, somehow, I didn't. Some little voice within kept saying, "Bill, you keep your mouth shut and keep out of this."

It was near dark when he got back, and he was pretty nervous. He kept smiling and flashing that gold tooth at me. Once he even clapped me on the back.

WHILE I was getting supper, he strolled off down the canyon. Pretty soon I heard a strange squeaking sound. At first I couldn't place it—then I got it. Drawing nails out of a box. He came back and gave me a sharp glance to see if I'd noticed his being gone.

After supper I went out to see that the stock were all right for the night. It was late in the season, and if it clouded up we'd have to get out and start home quick. It was time for snow, and when it snows you don't catch me anywhere in that Pedra Blanca country.

When I got to the place near where those sounds had come from, I commenced to look for tracks. I can read trail like most men read newspaper print.

He had a box of dynamite hidden down there in the creek bed, under a little pile of brush. I picked up a stick. It was old stuff—sweating on the outside—big drops on the outside of the paper. When dynamite gets that way you want to leave it alone. It may travel all day and act all right, and then, all of a sudden, without so much as batting an eyelash, off she goes!

I got away from there.

I started to tell him that night when the camp fire got down to coals that he'd better lay off of that dynamite—but somehow I didn't. The dark circle kept creeping in closer and closer and the black tops of the trees stood out more and more plainly against the sky.

THEN his gold tooth commenced to gleam again. I knew he was getting ready to sell me something.

"You know, Bill, what with these cold nights and all, I shouldn't wonder if that whole mountainside up there would slip down into the creek."

"That's all right," I told him. "We're far enough up here so that it'd only hit the flat a hundred yards down stream. We wouldn't be in danger."

"Yeah, I know that," he came back. "I was just tellin' you how likely it was to happen. I took a good look at it goin' down the trail this morning. I wouldn't wonder if something like that'd happen any time. Maybe you don't know it, but I used to be an engineer."

"Sounds like you was trying to be a prophet," I remarked. That was a mean dig.

After that we went to bed.

[Continued on page 92]

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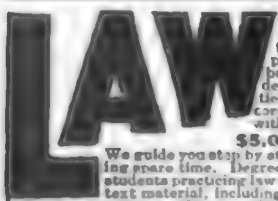
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[Continued from page 90]

He got up a little before midnight.

In about an hour the wind began to blow; a few clouds started slipping down the side of Bald Mountain. The earth kept rattling down over the edge pretty regular. It wasn't so cold, either. A man could make it by going 'way round the other side of the ledge.

By two o'clock the clouds were twisting and tossing. The stars commenced to get fainter—all except that bright star. It shone on through.

ALL of a sudden I heard a smothered "boom" away up on the side of the mountain. It was just getting a little light—just a gray streak in the East. It must have taken longer to plan that dynamite than McFadden had figured. I remember thinking fast right then how funny it was that he'd let go that blast before he was back in camp. It hurt his alibi, and again, it was dangerous.

I looked up the side of the mountain. The whole ridge started sliding down into the canyon. That bird had sure shown judgment in placing that shot. The white limestone ledge was reflecting the light in the East. The caves loomed up like pockmarks—thousands of them. I wondered if I could pick out the cave.

The whole mountain was roaring down over the ledge. Just as the big avalanche

hit the top of the caves, I spotted that one particular cave—and—something moved in it! Just a brief flash for a millionth of a second, then with a roar could be heard for four miles the dirt tore on past and filled up the canyon. The whole ridge came right on down.

I reported the facts—as much of them as I wanted to. I said I guessed McFadden must have fallen in his sleep and got caught in the slide or else had fallen down a mining shaft.

The railway company got all stirred up. They rushed a force of men over the Loma Paloma pass—and there they stuck. One or two men covered the country on snowshoes and found—snow. Drifts thirty to fifty feet deep in the canyon. Next spring they made a more thorough search. They didn't find anything.

It wasn't until last year that all of that slide slipped down and got washed away by the stream. The limestone cliff wasn't changed a bit; all of the thousands and thousands of caves were the same as ever. I knew just where to look.

Two skeletons in the cave—two skulls grinning at each other. One of them still had a gold tooth stuck in its jaw.

How's that—Jean? Oh, she's here. My wife. You met her when you came in.

As One Crook to Another

[Continued from page 29]

easily imagine him an attaché of one of the important American embassies.

Of this handsome and winning man, who has failed to make thievery and general dishonesty pay, Judge Edward Swann of New York said:

"He is as smooth a rascal as ever came before me. He is a real 'Raffles.' I consider him a very dangerous character, for he is such a smooth talker and such a fine dresser."

Smooth as was the Dapper, with a host of admiring friends in the underworld—and living happily in Paris, plying his old arts, clever enough to keep ahead of the French police—the rogue's destiny dropped upon him.

TWO New York detectives had been sent to the French capital to bring back to New York a prisoner. They were seated in the waiting room of the Prefect of Police, when the Dapper entered. He had been called to headquarters to be questioned about a little matter. There was no charge against him. Of all the thousands of detectives the world over, the two sitting in that room happened to know Don Collins.

"Why, hello, Dapper?" both sleuths exclaimed in surprise.

"Beg your pardon?" Oh, no, the detectives were quite mistaken.

The handsome smiling visitor to headquarters was quite sure the French police had made a grave mistake.

"But you will have to convince us from a cell," was the mandate of the Prefect. The Dapper was sent to La Sante jail, pending extradition. He was wanted in New York for grand larceny, the theft of five thousand dollars. He had been tried and convicted, had appealed, been released on bond, his conviction affirmed by the higher court, and had fled across the ocean.

WHEN Daley finally got his man to police headquarters in New York and put him before the desk for questioning, his record was compiled for the

benefit of the police of the cities of the world. When he has served his terms for the crimes laid against him, he will live under its shadow. It reads:

Arthur Collins, alias "Dapper Don," alias Robert Arthur Tourbillon, alias "The Rat," alias Thomas Watson, alias Stephen Daly, alias Gus Larsen, alias Charles A. Cromwell, alias Arthur Tyler, alias Edgar George, alias George P. Martin, alias Arthur Hussey. Bootlegger, thief and confidence man.

There is none of the quality in the Dapper that might make for his reform, or bring the realization that one of the hardest jobs in the world is that of being a criminal. His fate, the police believe, is a long term that will find him back in the world an old man, all his charm of personality taken from him by the reek and sweat of prison life. His occasional meals and occasional lodging will be secured by panhandling on the streets, his end a miserable one in every respect—perhaps a violent one, a bullet or the turning on of the gas if he can find a quarter to drop in the slot-meter.

The Dapper has had a thrilling career, but one with so much viciousness in it that it is robbed of romance. The plainclothes men of New York City consider him nothing other than a dangerous rogue, a thief, a liar, a blackmailer. They will never let up on him. A shadow will always be at his heels, and the hand of the law always ready to drop and seize its quarry.

DOES dishonesty pay?

Those who have been tempted and fallen can answer. The professional crook can answer.

Does honesty prove itself the best policy in life, as it proclaims itself to be in the copybook maxims?

Those who have been honest under difficulties and under temptation could tell many a story that would answer that question in the affirmative.



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get both practical and theoretical training; a big advantage over the shop taught operator. A shop taught pupil is like a home made dress, lacking finish. Many state boards today require educational qualifications.

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"You Women of Thirty!"

[Continued from page 63]

and the war-bride flung herself into hospital work to appease her loneliness. There she met men to whom money and luxury were desirable, indeed, but inconsequential as compared with their work; men who lived at a pace of which she had never dreamed, so intense was their appreciation of life in every phase. Her set would have damned them under the derisive term of "earnest souls," and so dismissed them from consideration. To her surprise she found that earnestness of purpose and performance was by no means incompatible with an almost savage zest of life on a scale broader than anything she had known. These strangers—doctors, professional officers, engineers, scientists, travelers—were infinitely more exciting than any companions of her own set.

Her mind awoke and clamored with an insistence beside which her normal physical appetites, of which she had been temporarily over-conscious, now seemed weak and insignificant. With the broadening of her mind, her emotional senses deepened. She was beginning to see life and the fullness thereof—and to love it!

Inevitably there were affairs of sentiment, for she was of the type which makes effortless and irresistible appeal to men; one of which might well have gone to its culmination but for her loyal resolution to play fair with her absent husband, now fighting in France.

It was of no avail. He came back, a better man than he had gone away, but still a stupid, kind, honorable, well-intentioned dolt. He found a wife whom he did not know; awakened, exigent, eager, plumed for flights into an ether which to him was uncharted emptiness. They still live together, and there is a child. But their marriage is, for her, a mechanical appendage of existence, like a house to live in or a car for convenience. All that there is of life beyond the material she must and does seek elsewhere.

MY OTHER case gleams with a more definite and authentic color of romance, however one may deplore its moral aspect. The woman—I can hardly call her that, so effortlessly has she retained the glamor and grace of girlhood, to the verge of the thirties—is a member by marriage of a distinguished family; the man is a sub-professor in an obscure Middle Western institution, with little to commend him to the brilliant, exacting woman of the world who loves him, except (by the law of opposites) a quaint and most unworldly sweetness and simplicity of character. They met in a camp a fortnight before he sailed, and that encounter established for each of them a life apart from their normal life. When he returned, she was married quite brilliantly; nevertheless he broke off his engagement to a girl of his own class and interests to become the slave of the semi-stranger woman, who is, perhaps, almost as much his slave as he is hers.

Once, since, they have broken the bond; prompted by caution or scruples on her part, by self-sacrificing loyalty on his. But the attraction was too strong. They now contrive to meet half a dozen times a year; these meetings are their respite—for the one from the humdrum, for the other from the pressure and glare of existence; they embody the savor and fragrance and passion of life. Disaster of one sort or another will almost inevitably ensue; possibly that most hopeless of all disasters, disillusionment. But thus far the woman has been adroit and powerful

enough to maintain the precarious balance of the double life.

OTHER nationalities manage these affairs differently; no better in a matter necessarily bad at best, but with more definiteness. In France, each of the three women I have cited would have taken a lover, deliberately, circumspectly and gracefully, because the Frenchwoman has the tradition and therefore the genius of intrigue. Were my discontented trio subjects of King George, two out of the three at least would openly have forsaken lawful ties for lawless ones, because the Englishwoman dares more for love, than her transatlantic cousin; she is more impatient of continued marital boredom. But the upper class of American "Julie" seldom has the courage of her emotions. So here we have these two lives emotionally adrift and at the mercy of unreckonable currents.

Individual cases, both of these, though not, for that reason, isolated ones. Now I come to a more typical aftermath of war. The girl possesses in a high degree every quality of attractiveness that makes the female of the species deadly to the male; yet at twenty-nine she is still unmarried. How far she has ventured upon substitute relationships is a topic of increasing whispers in her set, a set too gay and reckless not to be easily tolerant of anything less than blatant defiances of convention. Her friends ask themselves why she has drifted upon such courses, instead of accepting one of the many advantageous chances of marriage that have offered.

Only a few of them know that the answer is to be found in the influence, still potent, though dating back more than seven years, of a man twice her age, with whom the chances of war threw her into close contact day after day, and many days too long. She was a gay, pretty, flashing little creature with a mind unawakened; or at least less awakened than her senses. He aroused her mental appetite and, having aroused it, fed it to the full; and she responded by putting forth all the seductiveness of her young femininity for his ensnarement. Too deeply in love with her not to respect her innocence, he nevertheless ruined her as surely and more irretrievably than if he had carried her through the phases of a vulgar seduction. For he gave to the ordinary emotionalism of their "passionate friendship" an illumination of thought, of fancy, of imagination and intellectual excitement wholly new to her eager receptiveness; a glow of "the light that never was, on land or sea" which she could never thereafter hope to find in her own gay and shallow and sheltered backwater of life.

WHAT befell her has happened, essentially, to thousands of her age and status in society. Normally there would have been for them but two major considerations of love and marriage, social suitability and personal or physical appeal. Having married "the kind of men girls marry" they would have been suited if not necessarily happy. The broadening influence of the war with its heterogeneous associations introduced into the simple business of mating an intellectual craving, and what had been a perfectly straight, one-dimensional process, was suddenly expanded into a second or third dimension—with disastrous results. The displacements and replacements of war gave too many women too broadly intimate a view of too many men. As effect, there

was bound to be the intrusion of a disruptive element into the permanent relation of the sexes.

That disruptive element is embodied and personified in the woman of thirty more than any preceding type of American woman; keen, avid, discontented, mal-adjusted to her existence, and above all intelligently self-conscious in the higher sense and sex-conscious in more than the purely physical sense. She no longer confidently believes in marriage. And she is beginning to say so.

Since the first glimmerings of sex-mentality in the race, woman has tended to be polygamous intellectually and monogamous physically, just as man is by nature polygamous physically and by choice monogamous intellectually. The war accentuated for the girl of that day her instinct for intellectual promiscuity, and in such a way as to amalgamate it dangerously with her emotional self, beyond which it is only a short step, for women, to the physical. Today's typical woman of thirty is only too prone to contemplate that step as a normal and logical process of self-development.

"For a woman, emancipation means corruption," sermonizes Balzac in one of his frequent but not too convincing moods of virtuousness. The war-wife of 1924 is emancipated to a degree of which the professional agitators for women's rights have no conception—or they might be even more agitated than agitating! Conscious and comprehensive of herself and her demands upon life, she still carries her "flaming youth" like a torch, now burning with a steadier and more luminous power. As to whether or not, being emancipated, she is corrupted depends upon definition.

And all definitions fail when applied to women.

The Matinée Idol

[Continued from page 72]

had forced me into being for so long.

The day after the opening, I received a note from a man whom I had casually met during rehearsals. He was a rich Philadelphian and interested in the theatre. He informed me that he was coming back to my dressing-room after the play, and invited me to supper that night.

As I sat removing my make-up, I heard a woman's voice. There came a knock on my door, and the man from whom I had received the note entered, followed by a young girl. When I heard her name, I laughed secretly with pleasure. She was the only child of one of Philadelphia's noted families—a débutante about nineteen, whose desires were never permitted to get beyond the germ stage before being gratified. She was dark, slim as a boy, and her quick laughter, and pretty face were delightful. She was a new type to me—sophisticated at nineteen, the heroine of an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel.

She flitted about my dressing-room, picking up things, asking embarrassingly personal questions, stroking my costume which I had to wear in the play, smoking furiously; and finally taking my arm as we left the room, she whispered in a confidential manner that she "knew we were going to like each other very much, didn't I think so?" her head cocked on one side like an impudent bird.

I smiled back at her and we sailed forth joyously, stepping into her luxurious Rolls-Royce just as the star of our play emerged from the stage door. She saw us, and her eyes widened with surprise. Society to her was sacred, and the obvious delight which the social butterfly at my



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side exhibited in being with me, piqued her. But after that, however, I noticed she treated me with a little more respect.

THAT was the beginning of one of the most stirring love affairs I ever have had. For this girl, spoiled child of fortune that she was, fell head-over-heels in love with me.

She amused me tremendously. She had a droll, witty mind, quick as steel, and life to her was a gorgeously huge joke. She played with her whole heart and soul, and the hours flew in her presence. She danced like a nymph. She rode as well as I, and I think it was because she brought me back to my beloved horses, that the friendship between us deepened.

In her smart riding-habit, her slim young grace was pagan in its beauty. And one time, when she leaned far forward on her horse to direct my gaze to a wildflower growing by the road, I forgot everything and swept her from her horse into my arms.

She wasn't the least bit surprised. In fact, she said that she thought I was never going to realize she loved me. She returned my caresses with wild abandon, and we planned my few remaining days so that we could be together as much as possible.

Her position, though careless of gossip as she was, forced us to be somewhat cautious in our movements. We decided to make a quaint old-fashioned inn not far from the city our meeting place. We told the ancient couple who owned the place that we were to be married soon, and that we wanted to meet there because we could be alone, as it was off-season and very few people would be stopping even for meals.

She was so pert, so cute and above all, so gallant. When she rode by my side,

she was like a charming boy; at other times she was a different being—remote, elusive, distant. I felt that I never quite had her. Not that I was in love with her, but she seemed to elude me at the moment I thought I had conquered.

WE PARTED like good friends. No sentiment in the grasp of her hand—and the quick kiss she gave me told me nothing of her feelings.

Not long after, she sent me a clipping, announcing her marriage to a young man of no family but colossal wealth, whose one desire was to gain social prestige. The wedding was internationally celebrated and I often think about the bride, and wonder. I know she will never forget me, and that she had given me all the honest adoration of her fresh young heart.

The reaction of this affair made me want my wife with an intense longing. I decided to take matters in my own hand, and shall never forget her face when I appeared one Sunday morning at her friend's house.

The way she caught her breath! The flaming love in her eyes made me feel a cur, and when I silently took her in my arms, the tears in her eyes caused my heart to contract with pain. I solemnly swore to myself that I would spend my life in trying to make up for what I had done.

She never questioned me—her only reference to the past was one pregnant remark:

"Richard, I cannot suffer this way again. It is too much for one person to endure. I would gladly die for you, but darling, please don't make me go through what I have again. It has been Hell."

[To be concluded]

The Street Called Broadway

[Continued from page 43]

As the iced fire trickled down my throat, I thought of my first drink with Hal Bryant, and what it had led to. Never again, I told myself, almost choking over my glass, would whisky get the best of me. Janice filled up my glass immediately.

A moment later, when no one seemed watching, I slipped into the kitchen, determined to pour out most of the liquor so as not to be forced into drinking it. In the act of doing this, I turned, startled by a step behind me. Looking over my shoulder, I beheld the man with brown eyes.

"You seem out of place here," he began, pointing to my glass.

FROM that moment on, William Starret and I were together for the rest of the evening. Although he didn't care for more than a few drinks, he helped me out by taking mine when no one was looking—either drinking it or getting rid of it somehow.

At the dancing club we all went around to, we found ourselves alone at the table several times. Strangely enough I was soon telling him all about my work at the theater—how I didn't run around with the other girls—how lonely I found life by myself. And all about the mistake I had made in coming to New York for a stage career. Of course I couldn't tell him the truth about what sent me on the stage. I knew that must forever remain locked in my own heart.

"No, I can't go home. My dad has locked the door against me. He thinks the stage is wicked," I said.

William Starret's hands crept over mine, covering them beneath the table. His very touch seemed to give me strength; to make me feel that after all there were some good things left in life. He said he didn't want to see me lonely.

"You're too young, too fresh and sweet, Peggy, to be that way. I'm going to try and keep you from loneliness if I may," he declared.

When he left me at the door of my boarding house, Mr. Starret promised to call for me the next afternoon at three. We were going for a ride up the Hudson. That ride was the beginning of many things for me. Dinners followed it. There were many after-theater suppers. We took motor trips together on Sundays. Always there were presents from William Starret. But never a word that his interest in me was not deep and fine.

It wasn't long before I reached the point of looking eagerly for his phone calls and his meeting with me. They kept me from being lonely.

"Peggy," he said once, "I'd give most of my fortune to be a young man right now," he said, his eyes searching mine. His words brought a little gasp to my lips as I asked why.

"Because I love you, Peggy," he said slowly and deliberately, as if he were sure of what he was saying. "I ought to love you as a father, perhaps. But I don't. I love you as a man. I can't help myself. My life was a very lonesome thing when you came into it. That is why I happened to be on that party at Janice's. A vain gesture on my part to drive away lone-

liness. My wife has been dead for years, you know. My son lives away from home. He's an artist," he finished.

Just how we approached the idea of marriage, I cannot remember. My thoughts were swirling too swiftly at the moment. But, I do know that I told him the truth. I thought the world of him, I said, but, my love was different from his.

"It would be foolish for us to marry under those circumstances, Peggy," he decided. "I want to take you out of the place you're living in. I want you to get out of that show. Those other girls are cheap. They are not the kind you should be with. Perhaps, later, you may love me. If not, I will make no demands. That is how much I care."

AND so I went to live in the gorgeous apartment William Starret leased for me. I bought my clothes at the Fifth Avenue shops and he paid the bills. There was always a limousine at my beck and call. For days and days I sat in my new surroundings, certain I would soon wake up from a wonderful dream. One night William called to take me to the theater. He came early. I noticed as he surveyed me in a new dress that he was very nervous and restless. Suddenly, as we stood in the middle of my living room, he swept me into his arms.

"God forgive me, Peggy," he cried in a strained voice, his lips a few inches from mine, "but I can't help myself. It's terrible to love you the way I do. You're too—too much for me."

Then I felt his arms drawing me closer, and he was kissing me. I did not resent it, for after all William Starret had some right to expect a great deal from me. He was paying my way through life.

Suddenly something very terrible happened. His strength seemed to give way completely, and he would have toppled to the floor if I had not braced him. I managed to get him across to the divan.

For seconds he lay there as still as death, his face white and drawn. Frightened beyond my wits, I finally started to telephone for a doctor who lived in the building. Just as I picked up the receiver, Will moaned something to me. I rushed to his side.

"Heart trouble again," he murmured, twitching on the bed. "let me rest a few minutes."

I sat down and watched. At last he recovered his strength. Later I saw him home in a taxicab, but once back in my apartment again, I flung myself down on my bed and sobbed myself to sleep. Life had suddenly taken on more shadows!

Will phoned the next day saying he was much improved, but intended remaining home all day. The following morning a telephone message from him arrived saying that he was going to the country with his physician for a complete change and rest.

"I will be back in three weeks or a month," he said. "Please write often," giving me the address.

ALONE in my richly furnished place, with a closet full of beautiful clothes, I felt all of the misery of a lonely heart eating itself away in the wish for company and companionship. I missed William more and more with each passing day. The money in my bank and my pocketbook was powerless to tempt me to spend it in an attempt to drive away my loneliness. The beautiful limousine waiting for my call in a Fiftieth Street garage remained there. I felt so small and alone riding around in it with no place to go! In desperation I began occupying most of my time shopping along Fifth Avenue.

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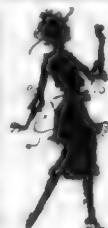


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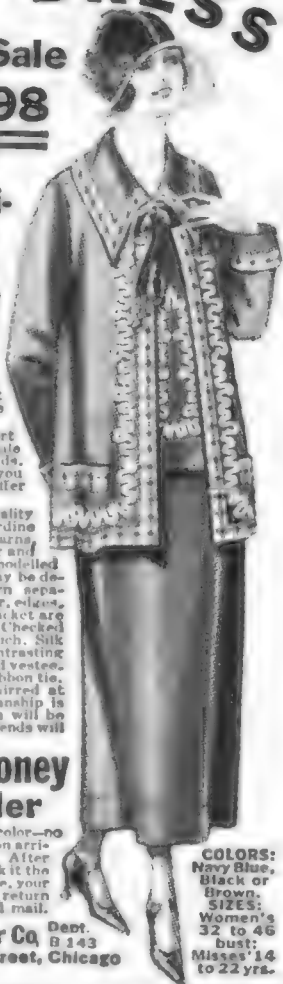
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Not that I started a mad money spending spree. I bought some things, but only after searching many shops for what I wanted.

Late one afternoon, I stopped in a famous novelty store where things of artistic value were sold. While examining some brass candlesticks, I heard a man's voice say to the clerk:

"Charge those book-ends to William Starret, Jr., please."

For a tiny second I felt as if an electric current were passing through me. The voice . . . the name he said! Those things impelled me to turn and look at the speaker.

I found him studying me anxiously. My eyes fluttered before his searching gaze, and I turned back to my candlesticks, trying to hide my confusion in the business of buying the brass. But my eyes were not satisfied with the meager glimpse I had had of a man whose voice and name made my heart turn over. Once more I turned slightly, drawn to him as if by an invisible magnetism.

THIS time our eyes met and I did not look away. I couldn't. They were brown eyes like his father's. Kindly, yes. But in their kindness there was all the fire of youth . . . of romance . . . of hopes and dreams not yet realized. His chin was strong, but his lips were sensitively suggestive of the artist.

In that meeting of our eyes, I knew that Fate had trapped me once again. I knew that I was beginning to pay in the bitter coin of regret for my life in the bright shadow of Broadway. For I sensed then and there that I loved this young man, and for me to love him was sheer madness—dangerous folly. Be that as it may, a sweet excitement took possession of me. It was the first sensation of eager thrill I had experienced since the night I stole away from my hotel room.

Some way or other, I never knew how, we were walking out of the store together. Half-heartedly I tried to leave him on the sidewalk. But, well—we were in a cab and off to one of the big hotels for tea.

We danced, and in his arms I refused to let thoughts of the past steal from me a happiness that simply lifted me off my feet. But when the music stopped and we were seated at our cosy table, I crashed down to earth again. I realized that my life would never be anything more than a vain yearning and wishing for something I could never have.

ALL that night I tossed and turned trying to summon the courage not to meet him the next afternoon, as I had promised to do in the weakness of our parting moment. First of all I knew it was wrong for me to care; or to let him care. Secondly I was afraid he might find out the truth. No matter how innocent my relations with his father might be, I knew the facts as they stood could not help but destroy any feelings he might possibly develop for me.

But I could not deny the love in my heart.

Because I told him circumstances prevented me from his calling upon me in person, or even telephoning me, our meetings were always in his Washington Square studio, or at one of the hotels or restaurants. It was while we were in his studio one afternoon, that he asked me to pose for him:

"Peggy, you're the very personification of a type I would like to do. Your sweet face is as delicate as a Greuze shepherdess. Please, sweetheart, will you let me paint it?" he begged.

On the verge of saying I would, a tremor of fright seized me. How could

I dare let him? Suppose his father saw the painting? Recognized me?

"I can't, dear," I said, my eyes failing to meet his.

"You won't pose for me, Peggy? When I love you so much," he replied in hurt tones.

"Not that, Billy. I can't let you do my face—" I murmured.

"For God's sake, sweetheart, tell me what is all this mystery about. I can't call you up. Mustn't ever try to find out where you live. I've put up with this wanting to know these things until I can't stand it any longer. I love you, Peggy, above everything. If you're married tell me and let's try to get you a divorce."

Married!

How I wished that might have been the case. That would have been simple. But my situation was hopeless. Every word I spoke was a dagger in his heart.

I left him at last standing by his easel, dry-eyed, but very white of face.

With leaden heart I returned and let myself into my lonely apartment. One second later I screamed hysterically as I beheld Billy's father coming towards me from the living room, his hands stretched out in welcome, his brown eyes alight with their kindly smile.

He accepted my excitement and nervousness as due to the unexpected shock of seeing him. He was telling me of his improved health, when I heard hurried footsteps in the hall—then a swift rapping at my door. Almost incoherent, I asked who was there.

"Billy," came the answer. I felt as if a thunderbolt had hit me. "I couldn't help it. I followed you. Please let me in, Peggy."

I looked to William Starret, panic in my eyes. There was bafflement in his gaze. But he seemed master of his wits. He motioned that he would go into another room. Then under his breath he told me to let Billy come in.

It seemed the only thing to do after that.

FOR a few moments the luxury of my place seemed to paralyze him.

"You should not have followed me, Billy," I moaned, unable to think of anything else to say, my mind still panic-stricken at the thought of his father in the next room listening.

My words broke the spell upon him. He came towards me. In another moment he had me into his arms, crying out that his love had driven him to follow me.

"Peggy—Peggy, I couldn't stop myself when you went out of that door; something pulled me after you. I love you—adore you. I won't give you up."

The sound of a heavy crash in the next room interrupted his outburst. A terrible premonition gripped me.

"Oh, Billy," I moaned, the strength having left my limbs and voice. "Hurry, it's your father." Then I sank to the floor while everything went black.

Billy was holding me in his arms when I opened my eyes again.

"Poor Dad. He's gone," groaned Billy. "He spoke a few words before the end. Told me about you two. Said he was getting ready to adopt you. The shock of my coming—what I said—was too much for his heart."

INSTEAD of estranging us, the discovery of his father's place in my life, and his death, brought Billy and I closer together than ever. He understood—because he had faith in his father, and perhaps a little bit in me. We mourned together for a death which we had hastened. And this Fall we stopped off at my home town on our honeymoon.

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On Such A Night

[Continued from page 20]

ashes of the fireplace, collected dirty cups, glasses, two empty milk bottles, and took them to the kitchen. There sink and gas-stove and table overflowed with dirty dishes, silver, soiled towels, pots and pans.

I ached to attack all this confusion. In my six months out of convent school Mother had never given me a chance at anything. But I had no right.

I washed my face in stinging cold water. I hesitated a moment. There were two closed doors. Then I opened one. I saw a bedroom in order, with tightly closed windows, drawn flowered curtains, a prim white bed. A closet with dresses under muslin covers—a dainty woman's room. I closed the door quickly. And just then Jimmie O'Meara came in.

"Did you see everything?" He suddenly demanded, his level eyes searching mine. "Did it get across to you, that if you should have the romance you're so crazy about, you'd live in a house like this?"

"Stupid!" I said scornfully. "Do you think the house I would live in would ever look like this?"

"But you couldn't—"

"Oh, couldn't I?"

"You must go," he insisted hastily. "Perhaps I've given you something to think about—something to remember."

I scoffed, some wild urge seized me. "Give me something worth remembering!" I demanded brazenly, and put up my lips. Let the quick eager arms hold me. It was not a fairy story after all, but real as sunshine. All the blazing glory of all my dreams was in that kiss.

MANY a time after that I met Jimmie O'Meara down on the hard, wave-swept beach. Together we would run and play in the crisp air like two happy children. I never went into his house after that first time. The only thing that marred the delight of those carefree weeks was the thought of my mother—what would happen if she ever found out about us?

One day, after an hour on the beach with Jimmy, I went in stealthily at the kitchen door as usual, and there was Mother standing right by Maggie's elbow. She wore a beautiful black georgette gown and her hair had been marcelled.

"Well, Janet," her voice was terribly quiet, a danger signal. "This is very mysterious."

"I was just walking, Mother."

"Just walking! And your poor sister dying! Perhaps dead!"

"Helen—Oh, Mother—not Helen! What is it?"

"Appendicitis. I must start in the morning. The telegram said 'at once' but you weren't to be found."

"Mother, let me go," I begged.

"You know you can't go," she snapped. "I've other plans for you. Change as quickly as you can. Your black dress and the pearls. Mr. Warner is here."

"Hurry." Her voice came hissing from between her teeth.

Shaking with varied emotions, I tried to hurry. I was struggling with my heavy wet hair when Maggie opened the door softly. "Oh, Maggie," I said anxiously. "Do you know anything about Helen?"

Her eyes narrowed significantly. "She got a telegram," she whispered. "It did say appendicitis. But she was after sending Miss Helen one first. I heard her."

"But, I—I don't understand."

She tapped her lips warningly, then

disappeared. Dazed, I tried to figure it all out.

The three of us sat down at a surprisingly festive dinner table. Mother's beautiful linen and thin old silver were out in beautiful array.

I tried to join in the conversation, but a sick fear was creeping over me. Maggie brought our coffee, went out.

Mother leaned across the table. "My darling," she began. I jumped as if she had struck me. Mother had never spoken like that. "Mr. Warner and I have decided," she went on—my wide-eyed stare disconcerted her. "It seems well that everything should be settled before I leave you. Mr. Warner will telephone at once for Dr. Benson of Trinity—"

"Telephone for Dr. Benson?" I repeated stupidly. "Why?" I stood up, grasping the arms of my chair.

Mr. Warner came over to me, put his arm around my shoulders. My blood turned to ice.

"Let me tell her!" He motioned Mother away. "It only means that I'll begin a little sooner to take care of my little sweetheart." He held me closer and pressed his cheek against my hair. I felt deathly sick.

"Dr. Benson will marry us tonight."

"Mother," I said desperately. "Mother, you wouldn't want me to be married now—Oh, Mother, please!"

I ran crazily to the window, threw it wide before they could stop me, letting in a deluge of rain and wind that puffed out the candles on the table and fanned the gentle wood fire into a leaping blaze.

"Janet!"

I ignored the fury in Mother's face. "Did you ever see such a night?" I asked her. "So black and terrible! Oh, I couldn't be married in a storm. It's only once, Mother. Tomorrow, in such a little while the sun will be shining. Oh, please, please!"

"Come, come!" Mr. Warner interrupted. "You mustn't feel like that, little girl. If you want to wait till morning, you poor little romantic child, it's all right—we'll wait! Come here now. No more heroics." He took me into his arms. "What do you want, Janet?"

"To be married in sunshine," I whispered.

He laughed. "And right now?"

"If I could take off these wet clothes and sleep to get rested for tomorrow," I ventured.

"Sensible little girl! Kiss me good-night and run along!"

I kissed him and went out, not daring to look at my mother.

I MUST have sat for hours in the dark, my face against the window, not thinking or planning, just listening to the roar of wind and rain and sea.

Then Mother's voice came at the door—came with a threat in it. I held my breath. She tried the locked door, then went away. I waited a long time after that. At last, I dressed in the dark—my heavy shoes, my winter coat—and went down the back stairs.

Jimmie O'Meara opened the door after a long time and stood staring down at me with unbelieving eyes.

"I've come to say good-by to you. I had to come now. I'm to be married in the morning," I laughed bitterly. "Shot at sunrise!"

He drew me in out of the storm, and took me in his arms.

I remember he sent me into that closed room to find something to put on. I

managed to get into a little ruffled summer dress and a pair of narrow black satin slippers, much too small for me. Jimmie brought wood and lighted a fire in the fireplace.

At last I crawled into his arms, and put my head down on his shoulder with a sigh of absolute content.

I OPENED my eyes, only to push down the warm fuzzy blanket which wrapped me to the chin.

The world was a still peaceful, lovely place. I could hear the faint slap of waves on the sand, and the snapping of a low fire. One casement window was open a little. Beyond it was a pale gray morning—a pink-tinged sky.

The door opened ever so softly. "Good morning, Jimmie O'Meara," I called gaily. "I'm awake. Oh, you're all dressed up!"

I stretched up my arms to him but he shook his head. His smile was a miserable failure.

"I have to be presentable if I'm going to have a word with the—the firing squad," he said huskily. "Come, Janet, we daren't wait much longer! It's nearly seven!"

He was white and haggard. "Jimmie, please." I put up my arms to him again.

"No," he said stubbornly. "You're not going to make it any harder for both of us. I've sent for a taxi. It's nearly time now. I'll bring you some coffee in here. The kitchen is cold."

He brought it—awful stuff, very black and bitter, spilling over into the saucer. Then I saw how his hands were shaking. My eyes smarted, and my throat began to ache.

"Can't you drink it?" he asked anxiously.

"It's so hot!" I blinked back the tears. "Jimmie, I'll go alone."

"You will not," he said shortly. "Oh, that's the taxi now!" I took a swift last look at the loved little place. My heart suddenly turned to stone. "I'll say good-by to you here, please. Don't open the door, just a minute, Jimmie!"

HE BENT as if to kiss me quickly, and then I was clinging to him with all my strength, crying wildly. He tried at first to comfort me—held me close to him—with stumbling, broken words that I could hardly hear for the beating of my heart. He kissed my hair, my eyes, finally my lips.

And then we both knew—nothing else seemed to matter in the least.

"Janet," he said softly, "it's not good-by. I'm not letting you go. We belong to each other."

"Yes, Jimmie."

"I'll go to them now and tell them, and we will be married at once."

"We'll be married—and then we will tell them," I said firmly. "I've known Mother for nearly twenty years, and it's the only way."

Jimmie laughed at that. His arms tightened, pressing my wet cheek against his shoulder.

Outside the taxi panted impatiently. Somewhere I knew Mother fumed and raged. Mr. Warner—I dared not picture him—would he be angry and hurt? Or only jolted out of his vast self-assurance for a little while?

Somewhere there was a pearl necklace, a hoop of diamonds cast aside, and with them clanking chains.

The very first ray of sunshine slanted through the casement window, warm in our faces.

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Gabrielle of the Red Kimono

[Continued from page 34]

quiet, but no one in that courtroom had ever heard before a voice so loaded with outrage, with pain, with wild anger, as the voice that vibrated against the dingy walls.

"Since I am fourteen," said Gabrielle, "and I am nineteen now, I have lived for him. I was willing to go on—but not if he had a wife. Don't you see. Don't you see?" The seething tide of her heart flooded out now, through her throat in a passion of words, through her eyes in a torrent of tears.

"He was something every man spits on. He was bad. I know that. He had done every bad."

"But I loved him."

THE wail filled the courtroom. And suddenly, without knowing why, the eyes of the judge and the jury and even the hard-boiled reporters at the press table, were wet with tears.

"He was mine. What else had I to love? And he was good to me. He was gentle and kind. Back of my—my little house, there was a garden. A little bit of a garden. We would sit there, sometimes, and watch the birds hopping under the bushes. That doesn't seem much to you—maybe."

"And when I thought—of that other woman—the one he would marry—and that he love her, and with—my money—he make her a little home, and come to me only with—more dregs, like the others—I cannot stand it. If he would have left me alone—but I know him. I make too much money. I am very popular—in New Orleans. He would not leave me while—"

She shuddered, frightened, her anger dying. The district attorney succeeded at last in breaking into the wild flood of her words.

"If it wasn't revenge and jealousy that prompted you to kill this man—and it isn't the jury's business what kind of a man he was—why did you shoot six times?"

"I wanted to be sure," said Gabrielle, softly, "that he die quick and do not suffer."

With a start, the young lawyer came back to Gabrielle beside him: her eyes fixed on him wistfully. "I am getting very tired," she said. "What is it—that takes them so long? Don't they know what they think?"

"Sometimes they disagree."

"What does that mean?"

"Well, if they can't reach a verdict—they say so, and we try the case over."

"Oh, no. No. I won't do that. What do they think I am? I rather hang quick. Oh, you won't let them—"

She was silent. He noticed how her hands were clasped together, as though for comfort. It must be pretty tough for a woman to be alone, at a time like that.

He glanced around, suddenly wondering where Mrs. Fontane was.

IN THE more exuberant daily journals, they called Mrs. Fontane the angel of the county jail. The more prosaic ones referred to her as a philanthropist.

But Mrs. Fontane didn't like being called a philanthropist.

"It sounds so cold," she said, with her radiant smile, blinking her round brown eyes very quickly. "I'm nothing so impressive. I'm—just a worker for humanity."

She was a round, plump woman, with very curly brown hair, and a smile of miraculous sweetness.

And she had established herself in the early days of the trial as Gabrielle's pa-

troness. She had her picture taken innumerable times with Gabrielle. Day after day, as the trial progressed in all its sordid detail, she sat beside Gabrielle, holding her hand, patting it gently, and smiling.

A rap sounded upon the ground glass of the door.

Gabrielle's heart began to beat, not quickly, but with an icy, terrible slowness, as though it would never reach the next beat. Drop by drop, the color drained from her cheeks, leaving them a pale yellow.

THE bailiff disappeared into the jury room. In less than a second, he reappeared. Instantly, all was action. The crowd swept back from the corridors. The district attorney came over from his office, breathing loudly from his hurried trip. The judge, ponderous and heavy, ascended the bench.

The jury filed in, awkwardly, stumbling over each other. One juror still had on his derby hat. He took it off hurriedly.

Silence fell. A human life was at stake. And no matter how old the story, the gigantic thrill of it tingled through the air.

"Gentlemen of the jury," said the judge, and stopped to blow his nose with a great noise, "you have reached a verdict?"

The foreman rose, a shambling man, his Adam's apple working furiously up and down. "We have, your honor."

"What is your verdict, Mr. Foreman—guilty or not guilty?"

"We find the defendant not guilty."

Gabrielle got up, swaying. She held out her arms. She tried to run toward them. But her legs would not move. "I—oh, I thank you, I thank you so," she cried, in a husky, trembling voice.

People crowded about her. A reporter said, "And now that you're free, Gabrielle, where are you going? What are you going to do?"

Gabrielle looked at him. Behind her eyes, he had a glimpse of something, peeping from her thoughts, that was like a ghost of fear.

"Well," said Gabrielle, tossing her head. "I tell you, I don't know where I'm going but I'm on my way."

It had just come to her, with a great and terrible shock, that Howard Blaine was dead.

GABRIELLE stood in the center of the narrow jail cell that had been her home for months. The slanting afternoon sun left the palest light on the east windows, and the black bars merged into a gray pattern. Once Gabrielle glanced out at the alley below, the endless dirty walls, the white slab of the Federal building.

Then she looked around at her cell. On the table was a pot of white hyacinth someone had sent her.

Gabrielle stood, trying to calm the rising panic in her breast.

The matron came in, a thin, dried-up little woman, with quick, blue eyes. In her hand she carried a worn suitcase.

"Here you are," she said, laying it on the cot. "Will you be here for dinner? I expect not. You'll want to get out as quick as ever you can."

Gabrielle opened the suitcase. Then, when she thought her voice was fairly steady, she said, "Mrs. Barker, where am I to go?"

"Haven't you got any friends?"

"Not here."

"What about the place you come from—New Orleans?"

The girl raised her head and looked at

her. "I do not want to go back—there."
The matron sat down on the cot, tapping the tips of her fingers together in a nervous way she had. "Well—I suppose not. Didn't you ever do anything else?"
"No. But I—I would like to. Only I—I do not know—"

"How much money have you got?"
"I have," said Gabrielle, and suddenly she began to laugh, "I guess I got about two dollars."

The matron frowned.
"You're a sweet, kind, good-natured girl, Gabrielle," she said slowly. "Of all the women I've had in here, I never had one that was less trouble. You've got a mighty easy-going disposition. I don't take much stock in—reformatory, but I've got an idea you told the truth at the trial when you said it wasn't ever your own choosing and that you'd like to do different."

"Do you think anyone—lives that way because they—like it?" said Gabrielle. A violent shuddering seized her.

She was unpacking the suitcase. In her hands, she held a red kimono, a bedraggled thing, its cheerfulness crumpled and stale. Her eyes met the matron's, eyes full of a horrible remembrance.

FOLKS talk an awful lot," the matron remarked bitterly then, "but we've discovered up here most of them don't do much. Words are a sight more plentiful than work. You been getting flowers and poems and truck. I'd like to see somebody step up with a job."

"What can I do? I could—cook—maybe. I am very awkward. If only they don't—know who I am. Nowadays, they don't put no scarlet letter on you, like one woman I read about, but they might as well. They put your picture in the paper until everybody knows you."

She went and stood by the window, overcome with terror. The world outside seemed very large and strange and terrible to her. She knew so little of it, she who knew so much. What would happen to her out there, without money, without friends, with the brand of a murderess and worse stamped upon her face?

Oh, she could go back—back to New Orleans. She had friends there—such as they were. She could go back and put on her red kimono, and earn more diamonds. At the thought, a wave of nausea brought a cold sweat to her forehead. Well, she did not have to go back. Howard Blaine was dead.

The doorbell rang, with its harsh, metallic clatter. In the men's tanks, she heard a negro singing. In the dining room beyond, the clatter of dishes, and a smell of food. The matron got up and went out. But Gabrielle did not turn. There was something horrible to her that this cell seemed home—shelter—peace—protection. She had always been in prison. She was afraid to go out alone.

Mrs. Fontane's voice broke in upon her and she started. She did have a friend. Life rushed back to her heart, warmth to her cheek.

IN ANOTHER moment, two arms were around her, and a sweet, enthusiastic voice said, "My dear child, I am so happy for you. What must you think of me that I wasn't there to support you in the hour of your greatest trial? But I was needed elsewhere. Unfortunately, there's only one of me. But you know, there's no one happier than I am at your freedom and your vindication."

The matron spoke behind her, rather dryly. "Gabrielle hasn't any place to go, Mrs. Fontane. And she hasn't any money."

"No place to go?" Mrs. Fontane threw

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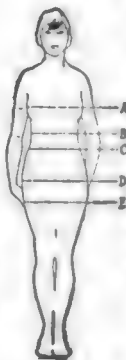
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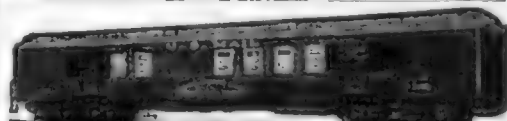
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up her fluffy head indignantly. "Of course she has. She's coming home with me."

The matron did not evince any particular enthusiasm. She was folding up the things Gabrielle had laid on the bed. "Maybe," she permitted herself to say, through narrow lips, "maybe she'd be more comfortable if you got her a little room somewhere and a job."

"All that in good time," said Mrs. Fontane, smiling. "But she must rest first, after this dreadful experience, and find some sunshine in life."

"She's been resting quite a while," said the matron, "and she's pretty anxious not to go back to—what she's been doing. Gabrielle'd be a good girl, if she had a chance."

"And she shall have her chance," said Mrs. Fontane, triumphantly.

At the door, Gabrielle went back, on an unexplainable impulse.

She put her arms around the dried-up little matron. "You have been good to me," she said. "I thank you. Pray for me."

And she went out, trembling and not very brave, into this unknown, strange world, only hopeful in that broken heart of hers that now at last she was going to have a chance to be a good girl.

Because, in her simple, primitive way, Gabrielle had always wanted to be a good girl.

THE Fontane mansion, on one of those exclusive Places that cut into Wilshire Boulevard, was marked by an elaborate stateliness. The sight-seeing buses stopped outside, to point it out as the residence of "Ex-Senator Fontane." Done in the style of the French chateau, surrounded by a park of fine old trees, it had an air of cold and elegant wealth.

The air in the dining room, where Mrs. Fontane was breakfasting with her husband, was tense this morning. The butler, when he went out to get the Senator's eggs, said to the chef, "The old man's got his dauber up this morning. Someday he'll really land on the madame, and she'll wonder what struck her."

The housemaids, sipping coffee in the alcove, laughed.

Unaware, apparently, of impending storm, Mrs. Fontane went on slitting open letter after letter from the pile at her plate. Her secretary always brought them in before Mrs. Fontane came downstairs.

The Senator rattled his paper violently, set his coffee cup down in its saucer with unnecessary vehemence, and finally said: "Look here, Louise, I'm a very reasonable man, and I dislike to interfere with your notions of charity. But will you be kind enough to tell me what you are going to do with this—this woman you've brought into our house? Sometimes I think you've lost what little sense you ever had. Here it is all over the front pages of the morning paper that you've brought this—this lady of easy virtue to live in my house. I'll be kidded to death at the club."

Mrs. Fontane finished the letter she was reading, then she smiled sweetly at her husband. "My dear, I'm sure you're too big a man to let a little ill-bred joking stand in the way of the reclamation of a human soul. This girl must be shown that she is just as good as any other woman—if she acts accordingly. She must be taught that there is a place in the world for all who care to redeem themselves. That's the first thing to do."

"I am having a tea for her tomorrow afternoon," Mrs. Fontane went on. "I want her to meet the worthwhile women—the women who are doing things. And I want them to meet her, and have a chance to study this social sore at close

quarters." She went on reading again.

Senator Fontane was unable to speak for several minutes. When he did his language was unprintable in the extreme.

"What are you going to do with her?" he said at last.

"She wishes to become a trained nurse."

"All right. Make her a trained nurse."

"I shall—in time," said his wife, checking a list before her with the little gold pencil hung about her neck. "First, I must buy her something fit to wear. In the meantime, be polite to her. The poor thing has suffered enough through men as it is."

"I hope I am always polite to women," said the Senator.

"Except, possibly, your wife," said Mrs. Fontane, with her famous smile.

MRS. FONTANE'S tea for Gabrielle was well attended.

When it was over, Gabrielle went up to her bedroom on the third floor and flung herself on the bed.

Never in her life had she known that such a thing could happen. Never in her life—her life of shame—had she felt so ashamed, so degraded, so vile. Her soul shuddered within her.

Their questions—their ugly, insinuating, brutal questions. Their terrible curiosity—stirring up the very dregs Gabrielle was beginning to forget.

What was going to happen to her, in such a world? There was no one to tell her, no one to explain, no one to lead her to the women who in quiet and dignity battled gloriously with problems such as hers.

For an hour she stormed her angry hurt into the pillow, cried the ache out of her heart, and prayed at last, in exhaustion, that she might learn to forgive them.

Then followed days. That was all they were to Gabrielle. Day after day, day after day. Nights—night after night, night after night.

In the daytime, the big house was very still and cold. Mrs. Fontane was a warm-blooded woman. She laughed at people who were cold, in California, even in the winter. If the furnace was on, she suffocated. So the furnace was not often on. And Gabrielle's room—a lovely, exquisitely furnished room it was, too, with a big cushioned chair, and many, many pictures—was often chilly. The chill crept into Gabrielle's blood.

Gabrielle was afraid to venture out of her room. Mrs. Fontane had told her to make herself at home, but then Mrs. Fontane was gone from early morning until late at night, and the servants were not cordial to Gabrielle. And when Mrs. Fontane was there, she had company. Gabrielle did not want to meet any more company.

All day she sat in the big chair, looking out at the cars that drove past, or the gardeners working among the flowers. If the Senator did not want her there, perhaps she had better not go out. It might shame him.

Sometimes they brought her her lunch on a tray. Sometimes, though, they forgot.

Mrs. Fontane was presiding over a convention. She presided better than anyone else. And she put up a great deal of the money. Naturally, the glory must be hers. She came up, almost every day, kissed Gabrielle affectionately, and said, "Now, my dear, amuse yourself, and rest. Don't try to do anything. And just as soon as I feel it's time—we'll see what is to be done for you."

ONE afternoon, Mrs. Fontane sent her car back to take Gabrielle for a ride.

Gabrielle had never ridden in just such a car. The butler sniffed as he opened

the door for her. He was a dignified soul. When they had gone a little way, the chauffeur turned around. His name was Freddy, and he had a nice, ugly face, with little twinkling blue eyes.

"Wouldn't you like to come up here with me?" he said.

At the beach, they rode on the roller coaster, and the merry-go-round, and they ate hot dogs and drank strawberry soda. Gabrielle had never had such a good time in all her life.

That part of it hadn't been in Mrs. Fontane's orders. But Freddy felt sorry for the kid. She looked so scared and white, and her big eyes held a shadow as though she expected him to hit her. Freddy was an unmoral little person, but he didn't like women to look like that. After all, she hadn't done anything. Freddy knew something about how girls start that sort of stuff. Some are all bad, of course, and take the quickest way. But with most—it just happens. As for shooting that beggar Howard Blaine, she ought to have a medal for it. All his kind ought to be shot.

If Gabrielle had a good time, so did Freddy. He had blown a lot of dames to a day at the beach, but never one who laughed and glowed and thanked him as did Gabrielle. They got to be pretty good friends, before the afternoon was over. She was so awful pretty, with those big, soft, golden-brown eyes. Freddy began to think if he had half a chance he might fall for her—in earnest, too. It wouldn't be fair to do the kid any more dirt.

Besides, she was quick on the trigger. He chuckled.

AFTER that, for a day or two, Gabrielle didn't mind so much. She had something to remember. And that afternoon was almost the only thing she could remember that she wanted to.

And then, one morning, when she had made her bed carefully, dressed herself in the blue silk dress Mrs. Fontane had bought her, and coiled her brown hair as neatly as she knew how in the back of her neck, the black-garbed housemaid who brought up her meals came in with a letter.

Gabrielle winced. There was menace in every new, strange thing in this house. "Well," said the girl—she was not a pretty girl—"here's a letter madame left for you."

"A letter?" said Gabrielle, putting her chin in the air, and looking at the girl steadily. She wasn't going to be bullied by a servant. That was too much.

"Yep—she's gone on one of those famous lecture tours of hers. Fine lectures she must give!"

"But—what about me?" Gabrielle had gone very white.

"Did you believe in that stuff she was handing you?" said the housemaid, with a grin. "She's always starting something, that one, but I never yet saw her finish nothing. Take it from me, most of these rich women are the hunk. Why not?" And she went out, still grinning.

Gabrielle read the letter. Mrs. Fontane had been called away suddenly—an imperative need at Sacramento—fearfully important—a law that would come up about the father's responsibility to his illegitimate children. She was going to make speeches about it, before a lot of women's clubs. But she was enclosing a letter to the superintendent of the County Hospital. They would put her to work at once.

GABRIELLE breathed then. She was glad Mrs. Fontane was gone. Glad. She had never felt comfortable with her. Now she would go to work. Work.

She found her hat—a black velvet, with

a soft, black quill about its brim.

At the big hospital, Gabrielle presented her letter. The long bare corridors, the strange hospital smell, the impersonal coldness of the great institution overwhelmed her for a moment, but she grasped wildly at her courage. Two nurses passed, in probationers' uniforms.

The superintendent was still reading the big, lavender, crested note when Gabrielle was ushered in. He was a small man, with piercing, regal black eyes, and a great beaked nose. He glanced at her, impersonally, and said, "Sit down, please. Mrs. Fontane writes that she wants me to put you on here, in the training school. Do you want to be a nurse?"

"Yes, sir," said Gabrielle, scarcely breathing.

"H-mm. You look strong. What's your name?"

Gabrielle gasped. Hadn't Mrs. Fontane told him? What should she say?

The superintendent was watching her. "Take off your hat," he said sharply.

Gabrielle took it off.

"Aren't you that Gabrielle girl who was tried here a while ago for murder?"

Gabrielle nodded, dumb, stricken.

"Good Lord, that Fontane woman is a fool. She knows I couldn't put you in training here. There'd be an awful rumpus. Why didn't she send you to some private hospital? You go back and tell her to take you—not send you—to her own doctor, and have him take you to his hospital and personally recommend you. Maybe, if the nurses don't kick up a fuss, they'll take you."

Gabrielle stumbled out. Her brain, worn with the weeks of strain, with the anguish of her trial, the loneliness of these past days, seemed to have stopped. She wanted to die, but she could not kill herself. That was the greatest sin of all. She did not want to sin any more.

SHE walked back to the Fontane mansion, her eyes set and strange.

The butler tried to shut the door at the sight of her, but she put her hand out and held it. "Where—is Freddy?" she asked.

"He's gone with Mrs. Fontane, my girl, and what's more he's a good lad and don't you be up to any of your tricks with him."

At the barred entrance to the jail, she asked for the matron. The deputy didn't recognize her, and she stood outside, looking in, her heart sick and cold.

Mrs. Barker wasn't there. She had gone on her vacation. The deputy, a new one, was harsh. He thought he had Gabrielle's number, all right.

In the street below, Gabrielle leaned against the cobbled wall. She couldn't stand this.

A man spoke to her. Gabrielle looked at him blindly. "Can you tell me the way to the telegraph office?" she said.

Bill Smith, who worked for the Southern Pacific, said that evening to his wife: "Say, Ruth," he called, "what'd you think. Remember that girl Gabrielle—you know the one was tried for murder?"

His wife answered from the kitchen. "Well, I sold her a ticket today to New Orleans. I recognized her from her pictures the minute she came up to my window. New Orleans was the place she came from. And she was going back. Pretty, you bet your life. But she looked kind of peeked, like she didn't much care what happened. I guess they all go back in the end."

He sat down at the table. His wife quivering with fatigue. "Yep," said Bill Smith, complacently helping himself to the potatoes, "I guess they all go back in the end."

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Heart Broken Melody

[Continued from page 38]

The words came unbidden to my lips; but even as I spoke I realized it was the first time I had addressed her by her Christian name, or thought of her by any other name than "Crow."

I saw her face grow even more pale.

"I do not love you," I went on, "in the way men often love the women they marry; but I admire and respect and like you. As far as I am concerned, I believe the other love—is dead." The image of Minna Bonner, pathetically dimmed by time and absence, flashed before me and faded.

"Crow" listened, her strong hands clenched in her lap till the knuckles showed white.

I looked out at the purple shadows in the western sky. A night bird winged past. In the silence it was as if I heard the echoing voices of little children.

"I am being entirely honest with you, as you have been with me," I said at last. "Marriage is built on the love of home and children. Passion is a mirage that passes and must die. Do you think you could be happy with me, Letty?"

"I think so," I heard her voice catch in a little sob. Her head sank on her breast.

"After all I am a woman," she said wistfully. "I would like to be loved a little."

At that I took her in my arms. My heart was full of a deep gladness.

"For all your bravado you are nothing but a little girl," I said as I kissed her tenderly.

LETTY and I were married that fall. We went to Canada for our wedding trip, but were back in the house at Lone Brush by Christmas.

We were happy. Marriage made little change in Letty. On her return home she reverted to her old ways of dressing and living. The only difference in her was that she swore less frequently, and when she spoke or looked at me there was a new softness in her voice and eyes.

Old Ike watched our happiness, longing ardently for the child to come to completely weld our union.

So two years passed. Letty's eyes had grown to have that yearning hungry look so often seen in the eyes of childless women. She ceased to speak of the desire of her heart; for she knew that to me the lack was as poignant as to her.

She thought she could interpret my occasional moods of melancholy as my thwarted longing for a child. I had confided to Letty when we were first married that my dream of becoming a great musician was to be fulfilled by my unborn son, my son who was to succeed where I had wavered and failed.

IT IS often when all hope has been abandoned that the miraculous occurs.

Letty had almost given up hope of a child when she knew that her prayer had been answered. Transported by ecstasy she told me one golden afternoon as we were driving to Boleton. As if to express the radiance of her joy she tore along the road at a more reckless speed than usual.

"Letty, dear," I pleaded, "don't drive so furiously. Please. Not now." I held her close.

"Just this once, Matt. I am so happy. We'll buy the Frost kiddies some candy and stop with it on the way back."

As we neared the Frost farm there was the shrill peal of childish laughter and four merry little heads bobbed up over

the stone wall. Then suddenly a tiny figure in white toddled out into the road directly in front of the car.

Letty gave a cry. She swerved the roadster at right angles to avoid running down the child. The car vibrated with the shock. There was a sickening smash. Then it turned over and crashed headlong into the stone wall.

Letty! Letty! Was she hurt? I tried to call her name, to reach her, but I could not move. Letty! My wife! My legs were numb, blood trickled into my eyes. I could taste it on my lips. Letty! Then everything went black.

When I came to I saw that I had been carried into the Frost kitchen. I was lying on a sofa. Flora Frost was standing beside me, her eyes wet with tears.

"Letty!" I cried. "Where is she?"

"She died," Mrs. Frost answered.

IKE WELLMAN was heart-broken at Letty's death; but he was spared the bitter knowledge that with Letty had gone the unborn child who would have fulfilled all his dreams and hopes.

The old man was shaken by his loss. He clung to me and in our sorrow we comforted each other.

In the spring he died and left me the bulk of his fortune. In the event of my dying without legal issue the estate was to go to an Agricultural College.

I was now past thirty. My hair was prematurely gray, my face had gained dignity and strength from the deeply chiseled lines of sorrow. I was lonely in the solitude of Ike Wellman's big white house.

With the death of old Ike my last link with my kind seemed broken. I had drifted completely from my brothers and sister. My thoughts often dwelt on the dead. My father, my mother, Letty, old Ike, all those who had loved me were gone.

ONE morning in my mail I found a letter from Minna Bonner.

I had all but forgotten her. Beside the nobility and splendor of spirit that had been Letty's, after the deep and abiding love I had known for my wife, my old attraction for Minna seemed puerile.

The letter was post-marked New York.

I found Minna in a cheap lodging house room. She was lying on a couch by the window, a pale, wasted little figure, so thin and worn that for a moment I doubted if it were really the girl I had known.

She greeted me with pathetic languor. The little hand she held out seemed so fragile it filled me with concern. A vast pity for her surged through me. Because she was so little she had always inspired in me a protective gentleness, which her illness now augmented.

I drew a chair up beside her, sat down.

"It's good of you to come, Matt," she said weakly. "I've been awful sick. Had a nervous breakdown. Just collapsed, something inside smashed down. It was most 'cause I was afraid Halbern'd star someone ahead of me. Now he will sure. The doctor says I got to rest three months yet. Just think of that." She wrung her hands, wept fitfully.

I tried to soothe her. I never could see a woman cry. The shadows under her big blue eyes distressed me. The tumbled masses of her curls seemed less bright.

Suddenly she noticed the mourning band on my arm.

"Oh, Matt, how selfish I am, talking



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of my troubles when you got plenty of your own." Tears trickled down her thin cheeks, and somehow I felt they were genuine. Instinctively her hand reached for mine, clasped it as might a child lost in the darkness.

Poor little Minna! I remembered that she had loved me once.

She clutched my arm. "Matt, you asked me once to marry you. Do you remember? But I would now, Matt, if you still want me. I'm scared and alone."

She began talking feverishly.

"Matt, I don't know what's wrong with me. I'm eaten up with restlessness. I want to be going all the time. It's like I had jazz in my blood. That's why I like being in pictures. They burn me up. My ma used to say what I needed to tone me down was half a dozen kids."

Was she right? Was a child the answer to the restless craving that consumes us all?

She flung her arms about me. "Oh, Matt, don't leave me here all alone. Don't leave me."

An ugly thought pierced through the pity which I felt for her.

"You said once you'd marry me if I had money enough. Is it that now, Minna?" I took her arms from around my neck, forced her to meet my eyes.

"No. It's not that, Matt, honest to God!" Her face blanched with terror. "It's that I'm afraid of being so alone. I never have forgotten you. I want those old feelings to come back. It was the best thing I ever knew."

"Poor little girl! They may never come back, those days, but I will be good to you, take care of you!"

"Then you don't love me any more, Matt?"

"Not that way."

She sat looking at me and slowly a hard, mutinous expression crept into her face. "I'll make you love me again. It's the way I look now, all dragged out. But when I get my color back you'll feel different." She began to cry feebly. "But, Matt, suppose I marry you and ever wanted to leave you—would you let me go?"

"Yes," I said gravely, "if you want to leave me I will let you go."

Again the look of terror blanched her face. "You don't care a damn about me any more," she whimpered, and covered her face with her hands.

I MARRIED Minna, I guess most of all because I was sorry for her, and thought I could take care of her. Then, too, there was comfort in the thought that her presence would lift the curse of loneliness from the great white house at Lone Brush.

After the first weeks our life was not entirely happy. The restlessness of which Minna had complained soon returned. She was lost and lonely in the big white house. Having few inner resources she found nothing to do in the country.

For a while she took an interest in the garden, but quickly wearied of it. Sunburn she considered disfiguring and when she went out she wore veils and gloves. She bought a parrot and amused herself with it till it bit her finger, then in a temper she sent it to the Frost children.

In her impetuous, spasmodic way Minna was fond of me. I trusted her. She was once more extraordinarily pretty. I was proud of her; but more and more our lives drifted apart.

The coming of the child I felt certain would draw us together. Minna's restlessness would then disappear. Maternity I believed was women's true destiny. Children alone could give them relief from that mystic inward turmoil of their



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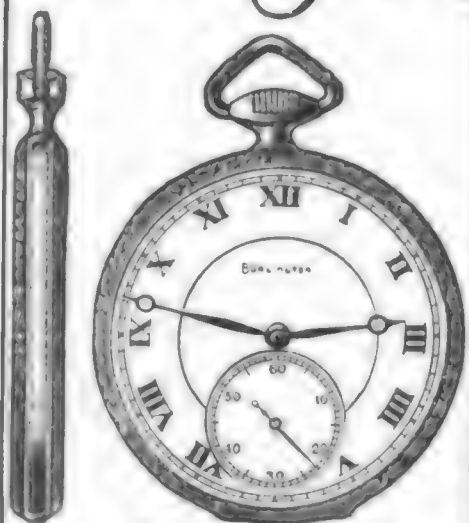
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souls. The child was born in March and was a boy.

My joy was unbounded. In a passion of gratitude and happiness I fell on my knees by Minna's bed and kissed her little white hands.

She faced me sullenly, withdrew her fingers from my clasp.

"You—don't care anything about me—all I've been through. You only married me because you wanted a child. Don't I know it!"

I was shocked, hurt.

I found my only happiness in the child's nursery. Half a dozen times a day I slipped in to see the baby. The perfection of the tiny body filled me with amazement and pride. The growth of the little fellow to me seemed nothing short of a miracle. I doubled the nurse's wages as if to procure for the child a purchasable maternity.

ONE day when the boy was about a year old the blow fell.

It should not have been unexpected; but it left me stunned. I had tried in every way to make Minna happy; but it seemed that I had failed.

It was evening. I was in the living room playing the violin when Minna came in. She had on her hat and coat.

"Matt," she said, "I'm a rotter and a beast, but I can't stand this life any more. I'm going to leave you."

I laid the violin on top of the piano.

Her face twitched, was very white.

"Is there someone else, Minna?" I asked patiently.

"In a way, yes. It's Halbern. He'll make me a star, if I go out to Hollywood and well, he says he wants to marry me. I don't love him." She broke down hysterically. "Oh, I should never have let you in for a mess like this. You can divorce me, Matt, and keep the baby."

Her callous heartlessness disgusted and enraged me.

"Have you stopped to think that the boy will grow up without a mother?"

"I've thought of all that," she cried petulantly, "but if I stay here I'll go mad. Remember, you said you'd let me go—"

"I am not trying to keep you." The look on my face drove her from the room. I heard the click of her high heels running down the porch to where the car waited.

MINNA had gone. Her departure affected me less than I could have believed. My boy absorbed me, filled my life.

He was a sturdy, handsome little fellow. Whenever I took him to the city to be outfitted, the saleswomen were all enraptured. People often turned on the street to look at him. It filled my heart with a pride so fierce as to be pain.

The boy was too beautiful. If anything were to happen to him, I never could survive without him. He was my all, my very life.

As the treacherous years of infancy were safely passed, my fears tormented me less. I redoubled my care of the boy. Even Sarah Penny, devotedly attached as she was to my son, was irked by my absurd precautions.

Less than six months after Minna had gone away, I received a letter from her, a pitiful scrawl in which she begged for money. All her schemes had fallen through. Halbern had lied to her, deserted her.

I answered the letter with a check.

Minna was still my wife. I had taken no steps to divorce her. She was just one of life's unfortunate weaklings for whom I was responsible.

Her calls on me for money became constant and increasingly exigent. My lawyer earnestly advised me not to keep

sending her money. But his importunities were cut short.

A long distance telephone message from Bellevue Hospital brought me to New York.

Poor little Minna had been taken to the psychopathic ward. Another breakdown. The doctor told me that she had been taking drugs for some months.

I made arrangements to have her sent to a sanatorium, but before they could be completed Minna's feeble little flame of life had flickered out. At the last she asked for me. Poor child! She died with her wasted little hand clutching tight hold of mine. For days the tragic havoc of her lovely face haunted me.

TIME passed. The years mercifully dulled the sharp edge of pain. I again knew a measure of happiness, a sense of peace. I began making plans for my son's future. As soon as he was old enough he should begin his music, have the best masters. Every advantage and opportunity money could buy should be his.

One Sunday afternoon, when little Matt was not yet five, I came into the great living room, with its polished floor, its Persian rugs and high-panelled walnut walls.

I found that the little fellow had climbed upon the seat and was reaching on top of the grand piano for my violin.

A great wave of hope swept over my heart. Was the child showing a love of music? I had hardly dared think that the great disappointment of my own life, the ideals I had had to put aside might actually be realized.

The little fellow clasped the violin to his breast and breathed with excited triumph clambered down uncertainly to the floor.

His chubby fingers tried to draw the bow across the loosened strings. It was not mere childish curiosity, but a love of music, that had made him climb up and and take down the bulky instrument from the piano.

I stood and looked at the tiny figure in the middle of that great empty room. The long shafts of June sunshine fell on his tangled golden curls. He had his mother's light hair, but everyone said he was the image of me.

I looked at the sturdy little limbs, the small square shoulders. Suppose that in him was the dominant call of the soil, that lure of the land of which old Ike Wellman had so often spoken. If that were so, then I would not attempt to force the boy against his natural inclinations.

After all, what did the music matter so long as the boy was well and strong and happy and loved me?

I was beginning to realize at last that love was the one thing that really counted. My love for my boy I would compensate for my selfishness, my neglect of my own father. Suffering had taught me its great lesson.

The art of arts was life.

Suddenly the little fellow caught sight of me standing in the doorway. His large dark eyes filled with fear, as if in touching the violin he had been caught doing something wrong.

"It's all right, son." My voice was husky with emotion. "I'm glad to see that you like the violin."

The little fellow scrambled to his feet, came toward me, the instrument in his arms. As I watched the boy cross the great room, it seemed to me that I was experiencing the happiest, the supremest moment I had ever known.

A great hope filled my heart as I felt his eager kiss warm on my cheek.

THE END

The Girl Who Wanted Everything

[Continued from page 56]

I didn't dare go in. My heart was numb with pain. Was this the end of everything? For I couldn't marry Hugh now.

That night, alone, I went to the lonely spot where we had often sat talking together. It seemed to me my heart was near to breaking. Below, in the valley, I could see the little house already furnished which had been my dream of home.

And tomorrow I must leave all this—forever!

The next day I scarcely spoke to Hugh. In my heart was nothing—not even tender memories. So far as I could see, there was nothing much left to live for.

But life must go on, and besides there was always the stage. After all, I loved it with a love that couldn't change.

The rest of my dream—home, love—that didn't matter now.

Hugh drove me down to the station. "Good-by, Maisie," he said sadly.

"Good-by!" I turned my face away. I couldn't even thank him for what he had done. He had killed all the gratitude I had ever felt for him by his cruel narrowness. I knew only one thing; I never wanted to see him again.

IN AN hour or so the train rolled into La Crosse station. The first person I saw was Jack. He waved to me and then rushed up with face bright with joy. He caught my hands, crying: "Dear girl!"

Something stirred in my heart. Jack—why, I hadn't thought of love and Jack together before.

After all, I could trust Jack. He had never disappointed me. So almost before I had realized it, I lifted my lips to his.

"My darling!" he said in a voice that trembled. "You—you never did that before! I appreciate it! Jove! You're looking well! The country certainly did agree with you."

In my heart I felt a little stab of pain. "I'm glad to get away," I said simply. "It's not my sort of life."

If Jack had known, I was forever giving up the best part of my dreams. I'd never have a home, a husband, now.

Well, I'd have to take what I could get. "About Winch, Jack?" I asked. "I'm ready."

"We'll go on tomorrow to see him," he said, very gently. I clung to his arm. After all, it was something to understand a man and to be understood.

"I'm ready," I repeated, looking into his eyes, "for everything!"

"Then you do care for me, Maisie?"

Sadly I nodded. "As much as I'll ever care for anyone—again. I did hope for—for the things every woman wants, a home, a husband. That's all over now. I'll have to take what I can get. I've always wanted too much."

We were alone in the quiet waiting-room. Jack caught my hand and held it. Tenderly he looked down into my eyes.

"About the home—I can't be sure yet, dear," he said. "But as for the husband, I'm free! My wife got her divorce two weeks ago. If you think you could trust me, Maisie."

I didn't care whether people stared or not. I let my head drop on his shoulder.

"I believe you're the only man I can trust, Jack. At least, you're the only man I could marry—and still keep all my dreams!"

Maybe he didn't understand, but at that moment I didn't care.

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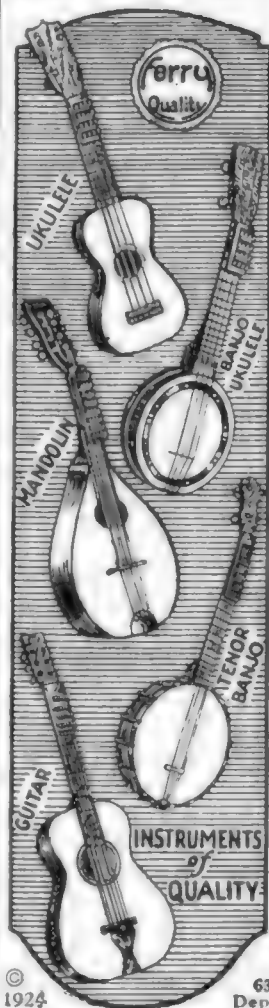
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The Dream House in the Desert

[Continued from page 68]

again she held the knife in her hand.

"If you lay a finger on me I'll kill you!" El Zurro spread his hands palm outwards. "Such a leetle knife. The coyote's bite is deeper. Si, if the Señorita wish?" Again he made that tantalizing gesture with his hands and turned away.

But at the door he paused. "Tonight, the priest he is come. I have order the wedding. Señorita will need the leetle knife."

He must have read the look in Maizie's eyes and interpreted its meaning. For himself he had no fear of the knife... but if she should use it against herself? "Madre di Dios!"

In a flash he had wrenched off his sombrero and sent it sailing across the room in Maizie's face. It blinded her and before she could grasp what had happened her wrist was caught and the knife was gone. She gasped in dismay. But El Zurro released her.

"Tonight the priest he is come. The fiesta must be prepare. Adios." He bowed and was gone.

I remember that as the gray-haired woman told me the story that night on the roof of the dream house, I leaned forward to say:

"And that beast made her marry him?" "No," she answered quietly, "El Zurro—died."

There were tears in her eyes, and I knew what I had suspected all along, that she was Maizie Futrelle.

The wedding night was typical of El Zurro—save for its climax. Word of the wedding had gone abroad through the other dance halls, and by night everything at El Zurro's was running full blast. A wedding was an event and should be celebrated as such. Even Hackmatack Evans heard of it.

Two of El Zurro's women had dressed Maizie, and when the appointed hour came she had been literally dragged into the dance hall to stand up beside El Zurro before the priest. And the "priest" was another of El Zurro's men, half drunk and garbed in a cassock that had been stolen with other loot when El Zurro's gang had sacked a mission.

Maizie gave up hope as the revolting ceremony began amid jeers and raucous laughter.

THEN Hackmatack walked in. Another minute and he was right in the middle of things, a sort of quiet spot in a cyclone—with everyone else in the place milling around and trying to get out of his way. He carried a gun in either hand and El Zurro was sprawled on the floor—even in death wearing his leering grin.

Of course Hackmatack had to make a run for it. But not until he had Maizie out the door first and had the gang inside thoroughly cowed. It was probably the unexpectedness of his attack that put it over. Hackmatack was not even known to have carried a gun, let alone use one. And when the single shot he fired through the crowd made El Zurro first gasp, and then grin and sink in a crumpled heap, the rest of the gang sought cover and didn't realize that there were fifty of themselves to Hackmatack's one. When they did realize it, Hackmatack and Maizie were gone, with El Zurro lying stark as a warning to any one who might care to follow. None did.

That was the manner of Hackmatack's wooing. Maizie knew he had saved her

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life and was grateful. But Hackmatack was one of those men who can't seem to say what he feels about a woman. He couldn't say that the first time he had seen her in El Zurro's place he had fallen in love with her. He couldn't tell her that on this trip he had come down expressly for the purpose of asking her to go away with him. El Zurro's own plans had given him courage to carry out the thing in his mind, but as he took Maizie to safety, far up in the mountains to the lonely shack beside the lonely claim, for the life of him he couldn't give words the things that were in his heart.

HACKMATACK'S claim was high on the mesa. Wind-swept and barren, it stood alone with nothing but sage brush for miles and an occasional stunted pinion cedar to break the monotony. But Maizie got well up there. Hackmatack had little to offer, but he made no demands on her. All her training had developed an unerring instinct to fit into whatever situation she might find herself. And now she was living in the same shack, miles from the nearest habitation, with a man to whom she owed her life, but whom she did not understand. For five years she lived in the shack by the claim. Hackmatack struck off for supplies every few months and brought her back little things from the world outside.

A wandering circuit rider had married her to Hackmatack in the first year of their sojourn in the shack—a marriage in name only. How she managed to stick out the loneliness seems nothing short of a miracle. Men in the desert have their work, but often their women go mad. Just outside of Reno, in Nevada, there is an asylum where most of the inmates are women, whom loneliness of years spent in the hills has robbed of reason.

Then into Maizie's life came the one thing she needed—the thing Hackmatack needed too. A stage line had been opened across-country and passed about eight miles below Hackmatack's claim.

But a few months after it began running, Maizie was standing in the door of the shack, when she saw a man coming up over the rise from the direction of the stage line. Her heart fluttered long before she could make sure who he was. Ed Daley had told her once long ago—the same Ed Daley who had offered to stake her until she got well—that he would go to the end of the earth for her if she would have him. She had refused then . . . but now?

The man coming up the trail to the shack was Ed Daley!

Hackmatack had seen him, too, from the mine. Maizie saw Hack cutting across the mesa to meet the stranger. Her head swam. She turned from the door and began a hectic preparation of dinner. She needed to think. Then they were at the door.

"Maizie, girl, here's—here's an old friend come way out here to see you." Hackmatack seemed to choke on the words.

Somehow Maizie covered her confusion. Daley hadn't changed much. It was, oh, so wonderful to have someone to talk to, to really hear from the world again! But back of all the talk, Maizie knew right from the start, without being told, that Ed Daley had come to take her away. In front of Hackmatack, Daley gave no sign. But tomorrow when Hack was down at his claim she knew what he would say to her—and half-afraid she knew what her answer would be.

BUT Hackmatack could be trusted to do the unexpected; just as he had done it that night five years before at El Zurro's. Hack couldn't talk, he couldn't say what was in his mind. But some-

times actions say much more than words. He knew well enough why Ed Daley had searched all over Arizona for Maizie. But he couldn't say to her what was in his mind.

After dinner he made a pretense of having to go down to the border for supplies. He would have to leave early in the morning, perhaps before daylight, if he was to get back again the same day. So he went to bed, and Maizie and Ed Daley went outside to sit under the stars and talk half the night away.

True to his word, Hack was up before dawn and headed for town. He was leaving the coast clear for Maizie. But instead of going to town, he went out into his own beloved hills. He wouldn't be due back before dark, but it was early afternoon when he returned to the shack. He could stand it out in the hills no longer. From the trail above the mine, he could look down on the shack, before he dipped into the arroya at the bottom. He saw what he had expected. There was no smoke issuing from the shack. The door was closed. Maizie and the stranger had gone.

Hackmatack gave a little choke, then tried to grin. He knew how terribly lonesome it had been for her. He knew how much he loved her, but love was one thing he never had had the courage to talk about to Maizie. Not after being married to her and living with her for nearly five years. She was gone now. The stranger could give the things he couldn't. He was almost glad, after all, there wasn't any smoke coming from the chimney.

He was even humming to himself as he came up the hill. Then when he pushed open the shack door, he saw Maizie sitting there.

"Hack," she said. "Hack, come here." And Hack came.

"Didn't you think I knew why you went away this morning, Hack?"

He just looked at her unable to answer and traced a pattern on the rough boards with one foot.

"There's something about—about the desert, Hack," Maizie went on. "I don't know what it is, Hack, but it's—it's got me. Me, Maizie Futrelle, who was brought up in the show business, Hack. I just love it, I guess. That's what I told Ed Daley. He didn't believe me. Then I told him that I loved you. He believed that and went away."

And then Hack said a funny thing. "Don't seem like there ever was to be any real pay dirt down in that mine, Maizie, girl. But I come out to the desert just because I thought you got closer to God out here. Then, Maizie, girl, after you come I jest knowed it."

NOW that's about all there is to the story of Maizie Futrelle and Hackmatack Evans. I learned it sitting on the roof of the Dream House in the Desert. It was late before the gray-haired woman's story was finished and I went on to Phoenix. I wanted to tell her that I knew she was telling her own story, but I'm glad I didn't. And the next day in Phoenix a friend of mine said he wanted to take me out and show me the finest little house in the world.

"You mean the Dream House in the Desert?" I asked.

"Why, yes," he answered. "Only I never heard it called that before. We just call it Hack's place."

"Hackmatack Evans?" I asked.

"Yes, he built that dream house, as you call it, when he struck it rich. But you can't pull him away from the desert. Nor his wife either."

And while I did not say so to my Phoenix friend, I feel sure I know why.



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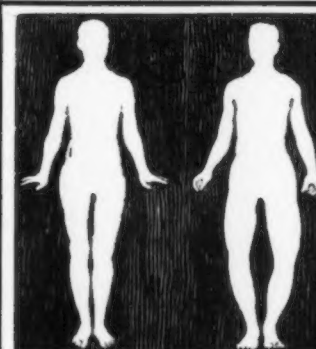
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